The Argument of Erasmus vp-
on the Epistle of Saint James thapostle.

IAmes, forasmuche as he was the bishop of Hierusalem, writeth al-
so to the residue of the Jewes, that wer scattred abroade and dwelt
throughout al nacions, enforming and instructing them with son-
dry preceptes, howe to ordre their lyues.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vp-
on the canonicall Epistle of .S. James.

The fyrste Chapter.

The texte.

¶ James the seruaunt of God and of the Lord Jesus Christe, sendeth greetinge to the xii. trybes whiche are scatered abroade. My brethren, count ye for an exceadynge ioye, when ye fall into diuers temptacions: knowyng thys, that the tryng of your faithe gendreth pacience: and let pacience haue her parfecte worke, that ye maye be parfect & sounde lackynge nothynge. If eny of you lacke wysdome, let him aske of hym that geueth it: euen God, which geueth to all men indifferently, and casteth no man in the teeth: and it shalbe geuen him. But let hym aske in fayth, and wauer not. For he that douteth, is lyke a waue of the sea, whiche is tost of the wyndes, and caryed with vyolence. Nether let that manne thynke, that he shall receaue eny thynge of the Lord. A wauerynge mynded man, is vnstable in all his wayes. Let the brother whiche is of lowe degre reioyce whan he is exalted. Agayne, let hym that is ryche reioyce whan he is made lowe. For euen as the flower of the grasse, shal he passe away. For as the sunne ryseth with heat, and the grasse widdereth, and his flower falleth awaye, and the beawty of the fasshion of it peryshethe: euen so shall the ryche manne peryshe in hys wayes. Happy is the manne that endureth temptacion: for when he is tryed, he shall receaue the crowne of lyfe, whiche the Lorde hathe promysed to them that loue hym.

IAmes that in tymes paste was a worshipper of Moses lawe, and now the worshipper and seruaũt of God the father (who after the Gospell is set forthe, requireth to bee worshipped in spiritte) and of his sonne Jesu Christe our lorde, writeth this Epistle bothe to all them that are rekened to be of Christes profession, and namely to those, whõe the storme of persecucion, which was raised after the death of Stephane, scattred abroade some one waye some an other, of all the kynreddes of the people of the Jewes: which were dryuen awaye out of theyr auncetours possessions, but not dryuen downe from the felowship of the Gospell: which were cast out of theyr owne houses, but not caste out of the congregacion of Christ: wishing vnto them true healthe, not this health of the bodye only, which the worlde wissheth for, but that healthe, which Christe geueth vnto those that his are, euen in the myddle of destruccions and deathes. Forasmuche as the commune profession of the Gospell, forasmuche as all one baptisme, maketh vs very brethren, & seing that amonge those that be brethren in dede there ought to bee a felowship bothe in matters of gladnes and of sadnes, this sorowfull calamitie which you abyde, woulde greue my mynde ex-

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ceadingly sore, if I had not an assured confidence of youre godlynes. For I am not ignoraunt, that vnto thē, which measure their felicity by the pleasures of this life, banyshment is more paynfully greuous than deathe: and that it semeth to be the wretchedest thing that may be, for a man to be plucked from his moste deare frendes: and being driuen out of their olde auncient possessions, to be straungers in forayn countreyes. But as for you, whiche haue reposed wholy all blessednes in only Christe, and loke for your felicitie not in thys worlde but in the worlde to come, it behoueth you to bee moste farre of from their iudgement. For God sendeth not these thinges vpon displeasure, but vpon hys exceading moste pitie: for this purpose doubtles, that through temporall afflictions, whiche you suffre vndeseruedly, your pacience myght bothe become the more notable, and youre rewarde the more abundaunte: to thyntent that as ofte as you are tossed on euery syde with sondry stormes of sorowes, you shoulde not only vnderstande, that you ought not to caste downe your hartes, as though God had forsaken you, but rather that you ought with all youre harte to reioyce, that by this euident token God loueth you, and careth for you, in that he tryeth youre pacience: whiche if it contynue stedfast, and geue not place to any assaultes of sorowes; it shall doubtles euidently appeare to bee a sure grounded foundacion of a Gospellike faithe. For excepte you were vtterly perswaded, that the reward of Immortalitie is ordayned for them, that here in this worlde are afflicted for the glory of Christes sake, you would not willingly and with mery chearefull stomakes suffre so much sorowes. Than seing that God woulde haue our saluacion to be moste chiefly ascribed vnto faithe, this apperteyneth to the glory of the Gospell, that men maye throughly perceaue by sure argumentes, that your faithfull truste is no commune tryflyng, nether wauering faithe, but a strong stedfaste and an inuincible faithe. For the thinge that is counterfaicte, or vayne, or feble, is moued out of place, whan the storme of sorowes cometh blustring in. But that muste nedes be true and of a sure grounde, that is nether ouercome nor beaten awaye with banyshmente nor with pouertie, ne with despitefull entreating, ne with prisoninges, ne with whippes, nether yet with deathe it self. It is compted a wonderful constauncy of mynde, if a man paciently suffer vnlucky fortune with an vnbroken stomacke, but whan they shall playnly perceaue, that you suffer thinges of them selues bothe greuous and bitter, with chearefull and mery reioycing hartes: to reken shamefull entreating done vnto you for the profession of Christes sake to be the highest glorye: to counte losse of goodes, for the richeste wynnynge: to esteme the greuous tormentes of body, for the pledge of euerlastyng pleasure: to iudge death which is a thing moste horrible of al, to be nothing elles, but the threshold & entrie of ye immortalitie to come: they shal vndoubtedly perceaue, yt your hope, wherwith being furnished you contēne those matters: is not a cōmune hope, nether proceding only of mans perswasiō, but to be confirmed by ye inspiraciō of the power of God. Notwithstādyng, like as fayth is not yet throughly alowed, onles it expresse it selfe by godlines of life & good turnes towardes the neighbours, euē so pacience shal not haue his throughly perfite praise, onles yt like as it is strong & chearefull in suffring of sorowes, euen so it be cōstaunt of it self in practising of good workes. It is a great matter, to suffre sorowes wt a good wil, but for the only glory of Christe: but it is a throughly perfit matter, whā a man is euil done to hi self, to do good for al mē: not to thē only which de-

serue it, but to thē also which do hī yͤ euil. For so it shall come to passe, yͭ you beīg mēbres shalbe cōformably like vnto yͤ head, disciples to yͤ scholemaister, childrē vnto the father, in case you bee perfect & vpright in euery point, & nothing wanting in you, that perteyneth to the perfite absolute furniture of the godlynes of the Gospell. This, I confesse, the lawe of Moses demāded not, & this also semeth folyshnes to the wise of this worlde: but it is a new kynde of Philosophy that hathe taught vs this newe wisedome, whiche Christe the heauenly doctor hathe brought in to the worlde. In this philosophie if a man be not yet sufficiently cōfirmed, it is not for him to runne vnto yͤ Philosophers of this world, for their doctrine is ouer muche tempred with myngle mangle, than can suffice to accomplishe so greate a weightie matter. It is aboue the powers of mortall menne, that is prescribed. It hathe nede of the celestiall helpe, and therfore ther is an heauenly rewarde ordayned. They that measure all theyr matters after the pleasures and displeasures of this worlde, if they bee at any tyme oppresse with sorowes, they aske counsail of men, they aske helpe of men: But you muste aske of God the helpe of heauenly wisedome. For he geueth vnto al, not only to the Iewes, but also to the gentiles, and he geueth accordyng to hys owne lyberall bounteousnes plenteifully, and casteth none in the teeth with hys good turne. He requireth no gramercye of vs, nether nedeth he any mannes helpyng hande. It is the Pharisees worde to saye: lorde doe that I aske, for I faste twyse in the weke. But the right godly man prayeth thus: I am vnworthy of thy bounteous goodnes, I am worthy of wrathe, but yet for all that loke vpon thy seruant, for thou by nature arte good and mercifull. Therfore if a man be mynded to obteyne of hym that he asketh, let him aske without destrusting, without doubt or wauering. Let him not considre the weight of the afflicciōs, let him not marke his owne power, let him only cōsidre yͭ God is the moste best and moste mightie, of whome he dependeth. He that putteth hys whole truste in the helpe of God, is sure and stedfast. But whosoeuer doubteth waueringlyt and loketh on eche syde, dependyng so of God, that he loketh withall for mēnes succours, nether beleueth with hys whole harte in the promisses of God, but as it were partly hauing a distruste, reasoneth with him selfe with humaine argumentes to and fro, concernyng dyuine matters, he is not stable: but as the waues of the sea are tossed and turned nowe hither nowe thyder, as the wynde and tyde caryeth them, euen so he is caryed about with humayne reasons and dyuerse sortes of opinions, and is become out of equalitie and vnlyke to hym self. Therfore he that is such a one is deceaued, if he thinke that he shal obteyn any thing of god whan he thinketh euil of him, of whō he asketh helpe, distrusting hym, as though he ether would lytel good vnto mē, & could do lytell, or elles were litel true in his promises. The sure christian faithe is single, & wauereth no waye, but always beholdeth only him, which forsaketh none that trusteth in hym, whether it chaunce to lyue or to dye. But the manne, whose mynde is diuyded two wayes, geuynge respecte to God on thys parte, and to the worlde on that parte, he is out of euen grounde and inconstaunt not only in hys prayers, but in all thynges also that he goeth about, hauyng one thyng in hys mouthe, an other thing in his harte: and as tyme serueth, affected now after this sorte nowe after that sorte. It behoueth a man not to turne hys mynde as fortune bloweth to and fro, as the commune sorte of men doeth. But rather let the christian of low degree, & he that is pressed with sondry lumpes of sorowes, stretch vp his harte, & reioice in this behalf, yͭ being despised of yͤ world he is not

despised

despised with God; who beyng nothyng offended at the bassenes of state or fortune, hathe made him worthy of the felowship of sayntes, nether excludeth he him out of the enheritaunce of the kingdome of heauen. On the other parte let the riche man reioyce to himselfe in thys behalfe, that where as he was muche set by amonge worldlinges for the false goodes of thys worlde, nowe for the professing of Christe he is despised and contemned: and where as pryde made him hyghe stomaked before by reason of hys vayne goodes, nowe beyng caste downe with men and troden vnder fete, he is rich in true goodes with God. By thys meanes it shall come to passe, that nether the poore mannes lowe degree shall caste hym downe, nor the riche mannes prosperitie make hym insolent, especially if they on ether of theyr partes consider, that bothe the euilles, wherewith the pore are pressed, and the goodes, wherin the riche set their pleasure, are not of longe continuaunce, but hastely vanyshe away, none otherwyse than the flowres of herbes, whiche like as by the calme south weste wynde they thruste forth them selues sodaynly at the dew of the spryng tyme, euen so by & by at the blustrynge of the northe wynde and heate of the sunne, they wyther awaye and dye, in somuche that the flower, that sprang at the sunne rysinge and delited mennes eies with his most pleasaunte colour, is seene dye at the sunne settyng. The trees, inasmuch as they are fast set vpō depe rotes, & furnished with sure grounded strength, are longe grene, and some are also euermore grene, and leaue not theyr fayre greenesse, neither for vnreasonable wyndes nor rugged wynter: But the herbe, because it is not furnyshed with the same thinges, anon as the hote sunne is broken out, is destitute of his iuyce, wherwith it nourished that fayrenes of the floure for the time. And so whā it fayneth in the stalkes it doeth nether nourishe ne susteyne his floure, but withereth, ageth, dyeth, falleth away, where as a litell before it delited mens eies with so greate a fauour. Because therfore no christyan shoulde glorye in those thynges that are nether of sure grounde nor longe enduring, let him rather respecte the thinges that are eternall, and that are delectable in the sight of God: let him rather studie to bee a braunche alwayes grene, than a herbe that with a lyght hurte will by and by dye. Doest thou see nowe the flower that is sprongen, how fayre, how goodly, how pleasaunte of colour and how swete it is? what a gorgiousnes of grene leaues, what a glistring, what a iuyce, what youthe hathe it? And anone at a blaste of the southe winde, and with the heate of the sunne, what fading, what ageing, what dieng hathe it? The floure is sene to spring, to come forwarde, to be at the best, to age and to dye all in one daye. And like vnto it is riche mens felicitie. He that nowe ruffleth in purple, shyneth in gold, glistereth in precious stones, hathe a great trayne waytyng on hym, is caried in a charet, and is honoured as it were a certaine God among men: if fortune blowe backewarde, he shall ether bee wyped besydes al his goodes & be banished to goe on begging, or lye criyng in prison, or be trussed vp with a tyburne typpet and fede rauens, or if none of these thynges happen vnto him, yet death shall come vnthought vpon, and sodainly dispatche al his galaunt araye. It is the parte of the heathens to measure felicitye by these maner of goods, which (ouer that thei depend vpon fortunes chaunce, ouer that thei, as nothing elles doeth, forsake vs whan we departe hence) if thei bee not set naught by, bring destruccion. It is the office of Christians to folowe those thinges, wherby eternall goodes are gotten, vpon which nether fortune, nether age, nether deathe hath any enterest.

For no manne is blessed because he is riche, but he shall be surely blessed if for the profession of the Gospelles sake, he haue ben spoyled of those thynges that he had in possession, yf he haue defyed the pleasures of thys lyfe, whiche he had abundaunce of, and suffre tormentes and emprisonmentes for Christes sake, if he endure for hys sake in all sorowes euen unto death with an unshrinkyng harte, interpretyng on thys wise, that the more he is pressed with the sorowes of thys worlde, so muche the more he is loued of God, whiche tryeth the pacience of his obedient seruaunte to hys owne glorye, that he maye bothe bee an example unto other to defie thys worlde, and after he hathe valeauntly behaued hym selfe in the conflicte, and hathe shewed a lesson of true vertue and of fayth, he maye weare the Palme and crowne, not of oken bowes and of laurell, for they doe wither also (after suche sorte as they receyue, which hunt after rewarde and prayse of menne) but the crowne of immortall lyfe, whiche is promysed not of a man that canne deceaue, but of God him selfe. But he hath promysed it, not to them that haue muckred up the greatest substaunce of riches, not to them that haue excelled other in bodyly strength, not to them that haue shedde moste bloude, but to them that for hys sake haue defied the goodes of thys worlde, and haue valeauntly suffred the displeasures of this worlde.

The texte. Let no man saye when he is tempted, that he is tempted of God. For as God cannot be tempted to euyll, so neythe he hym self tempteth any man. But euery man is tempted, when he is drawne away, & entysed of hys own concupiscence. Then when lust hathe conceaued, she bryngeth forth synne: & synne whe it is fynyshed, bryngeth forth death. Do not erre, my deare brethren. Euery good gyfte, and euery parfecte gyfte, is from aboue, and commeth downe from the father of lyghtes, with whome is no variablenesse, nether is he chaunged unto darknes. Of hys owne will begat he us with the worde of trueth, that we shoulde be the fyrste frutes of hys creatures. Wherfore (deare brethren) let euery man be swyfte to heare, slowe to speake, slowe to wrath. For the wrathe of man worketh not that whiche is ryghteous before God. Wherfore, laye aparte al fylthynes & superfluytie of malicyousnes, and receaue with mekenes, the worde that is graffed in you, which is able to saue youre soules.

Whether a man loue God purely, the pleasures of this worlde dooe trye, but muche more doeth the hurly burly of afflictions. And it is in us, that being furnyshed with the helping ayde of God, we maye nether become tendre nycelynges through vayne pleasures, ne moued with terrible turmoylinges. But if a manne be moued with the delices of the worlde from the right state of mynde, or if a man be led by ye sorow of afflictiōs out of true godlines, he hath nothing to laie unto Goddes charge. He yt getteth the victorie, getteth the victory by the helpe of God: and he that is ouercomme, is ouercome through hys own faulte. For God doeth not geue menne occasyon to synne, but the thynge that he geueth accordyng to his own goodnes for the nouryshment and encreace of godlines, our myndes being corrupte, and as it were cralled with affections, turneth to thoccasyon of theyr owne destruction. For God doeth somtymes geue us the use of habundaunce of goodes, and the commodities of life, to the intent that being prouoked by his liberall goodnes we should rendre thankes unto him. Againe, he suffreth us somtymes to bee afflicted with aduersities, that he may both make our godlines more notably seene, & encreace our rewarde. And if the matter turne to the cōtrary parte, it is our faulte & not his. For like as he being by nature good, can not bee prouoked wt any euilles, euen so doth he entice noman unto euil. The thing is of us, that turneth the goodnes of God unto oure euil. He geueth plentie of meates, he geueth the liquor of wyne, that beyng moderately refreshed, we shoulde geue prayses to the maker. And shall he that is dronken with wyne call God unto the lawe? no in no wyse: les

let him accuse his owne mynde, whose vicious gredynes entised and drewe him to dronkenes. Ther is a certayne readynes vnto vice graffed in oure hartes of our fyrste parentes vice, and that is as it were a sede of synne. And if it bee receaued in to the harte and receaue nourishment, than the mynde hathe as it were all ready conceaued synne. And onles the vicious desire be dryuen out of mynde, the stynking smell of it groweth and wareth strong by litell and litell, till deadly synne be cōmitted. Whiche, whan it is in his nombres consūmately done, beginneth to bring forthe frute it self agayne. And the frute that it bringeth forthe is the naughtiest frute of all, euen deathe euerlasting: And this is the most heauy frute of that pleasure that is delectable in outwarde appearaūce, and promysing swete geare, I wote not what, while it hydeth vnder the bayte of pleasure, the very angling hoke of death. Like therfore as thys lower worlde hath nothing pure and perfite in euery parte, but the good thinges are corrupt with the badde, and the thinges that are of gladnes are enterchaungeably myngled with sadnesse, corrupcion enfecteth the ayer, disease and age decayeth the strength of bodye, darkenes hyndreth the fauour of light: euen so in our myndes, as longe as they are entangled with these bodyes, there is scarcely any thynge in all partes blessed and pure, but it is corrupt with some spotte of humaine desires or with the darkenes of errour and ignoraunce. But what so euer naughtynes is in vs, we ought to impute it vnto oure selues and not to God. For if we were of pure affeccions, if we put oure truste with oure whole harte in God, if we breathed with all oure inwarde powers vnto the thinges that are euerlasting and heauenly, what so euer shoulde bee layed agaynste vs in this life, whether it were mery or sory, it woulde turne to the increace of Godlynes. Therfore deare brethren, doe not you as the commune sort of folish men doeth, who to thintent they may excuse theyr synnes, pleade with the maker of nature at law, as though he were the autor of synne. Farre be this errour from you, whiche haue learned the Gospells philosophie. Like as God of his owne nature is purely and moste chiefly good, euen so doeth there nothing procede from him but that whiche is good. Yf any naughtynes therfore be in vs, let vs not ascribe it vnto God but vnto oure owne selues: and yf any good thyng, yf any true lyght, yf any vndefyled wysedome be in vs, let vs ascribe it wholy vnto God the autor. Yf this grosse worlde haue any lyght, it hathe it of the heauenly bodies, and especially of the sunne. What true knowlage so euer is in vs, what pure and syncere affeccion so euer be in vs, it ariseth not of vs (for we are nothyng elles but synners and ignoraunt persones,) but it proceedeth from aboue: what so euer is truly good, it commeth from the autor of all goodnes: what so euer lawfull and perfite thing there be, and such thing as maketh you acceptable vnto God, it cometh from the fountayne of all perfeccion: what so euer is truly light, the father and prince of all true light sendeth it vnto vs frō him self. These thinges he bestoweth not vpō oure desertes, but he geueth them vnto vs frely, as he is liberall of nature. They are giftes rather than rewardes, it is a liberal larges rather than a hire. It is not right therfore that we chalenge any thing therof vnto vs, but for our naughtynes let vs call vpon the mercie of God: for goodnes bicause it is not ours, let vs geue thankes vnto his liberalitie. Like as he of his owne nature is the beste, euen so he can not geue but the thynges that are beste: lyke as he is

vnchaungeable, and alwayes like hymselfe, so there is nothing with him, that is obscured with any course of darkenes. This our daye is taken awaye of the night folowing, and caste about with cloudes goyng betwene, humayne wisedome is darkened with errours of opinions, mans vprighteousnes is infected with naughty desires. With him there is no mixture of euylles, no courses of darkenes. It behoueth vs therfore also to conforme our selues to the vttermost of our powers according to his simplicitie, that geuing our selues vnto godly studyes, and being apte more and more to receyue his giftes, we maye be as it were transformed in to hym. For it is conuenient, that children resemble the nature of their parent. We haue vnthirftyly resembled Adam the prynce of this grosse and corrupt birthe. He being obscured with the darkenes of synnes hath begotten vs that are entangled with darkenes. In that we lothe heauenly thinges, in that we are gredy of earthy thinges, we resemble the disposicion of hym. In that we are blynde, in that we doe at al auentures as ẏ blinde man casteth his staffe, and in that we fall, it is of our earthy parent. But the father of heauen hathe more happyly begotten vs agayne, that being as it were created newe agayne we myght conforme our selues like vnto our newe birthe in Innocencie of life, and knowlage of euerlasting trueth. That earthy father being seduced with the false deceatefull promisses of the serpent, begate vs vnto darkenes. And this heauenly father begate vs agayne not of the corrupt sede of our earthye father, but of the most pure sede of the eternall and trueth speaking worde. The serpentes worde was a lyeng worde, and caste downe manne from the state of Innocencie. But the worde of the Gospelles doctrine is true, wherby we are chosen into the enheritaunce of Immortalitie, and called in to the felowshippe of Jesu Christe the sonne of God. He was the true light proceding of the moste high light, whose doctrine hathe made bright mens myndes, and set them free from the doctrine of this worlde. And the heauenly worde is of suche efficacie, that it doeth not onlye chaunge vs, but transformeth vs as it were vtterly in to other men, abhorryng now the thynges that we loued muche before, and loue that, we before abhorred. And this is the honoure that the heauenly father worshyped vs withal not prouoked by our merites, but of his own free goodnes, wherby he so determyned from euerlasting, that he woulde, by suche meanes as hathe not ben hearde tell of, make a newe creature in the earthe, and woulde that we shoulde bee as it were the fyrst frutes of thys newe estate, in that we are called amonge the fyrste vnto the doctrine of the Gospell. Forasmuche than as God hathe endued vs with thys honour frely, it remayneth, that we conforme oure selues lyke vnto hys bounteous goodnes to the vttermost of our power againe: we are frely admitted vnto this felicity, but we might fall from it agayne for all that through our owne fault, onles we studie to kepe through godly forcastes that which is frely geuē. It were of non effecte for vs to be chosen through baptisme, and professing of the Gospelles doctrine in to the felowship of the sonne of God, excepte we frame oure selues through chast and cleane maners like vnto our profession. That like as euerlastyng lighte hathe geuen vs light by the sonne of God, so muste all oure life beare witnes, that we belonge to the felowship of light. We once caste of the olde manne with hys errours, with his affectes, with hys vices, now it is reason that we ensue the cleane contrary thynges. Heretofore you had rather seme maisters than disciples, for so ambicion perswaded you, that the commune

people

people woulde recon him the better learned, that was moste ful of bablyng: you had rather haue ben angrye with hym that counsailed you aright, than to acknowlage your faulte: you had rather haue folowed wicked outragious luste, than ensue those thinges that bring saluacion: Now my deare brethren, who so will be coumpted a new man, let him be slow to speake, swyft to heare, and ready to learne of any manne. Howbeit let no manne rashly nor ouer hastyly take vpon him to be a teacher. And like as he is not voyde of peril to fall, that is hastye to speake, euen so is that manne inclined to doe iniurie, whiche is lightly moued in hys mynde. For it is requisite that godly menne bee farre of, not only from all reuengement, but also from all euill speaking. For he shalbe the more safe from chyding, that maketh no aunswer: and he shal do no man wrong, that whan he is prouoked, is not angrye. Among men peraduenture he shall seme a iuste man, that requireth one euil worde with an other, one euill dede for an other, but yet he shalbe a greate deale wyde from the iustice of God, who by hys sonne hathe taught vs, to speake well of them that backbyte vs, to wishe well to them that wishe euil to vs, to doe good for them that doe euil vnto vs. These thinges he dooeth not, that letteth his tongue runne at large, whiche is a warbling membre and a slyppery, nor he that hathe wrathe secretly. These maner of lustes, like as they ouerthrowe and cheoke the sede of Goddes worde, that whan it commeth vp it bring forthe no frute in you, euen so doe they lette that it canne not bee sowen in to the fielde of the mynde. It taketh no rote in a brlery place, ne in marice, nether in the sande that fleeteth awaye, but it requireth a pure, a trymme and a substauncial grounde. Therfore if ye will, that the sede of the worde of the Gospell, that is once cast, bring frute in you, frute (I say) not for a season, or a commune frute wherwith the bodyes may be refreshed, but the eternall saluacion of your soules: make cleane the fielde of your harte, not onely from the tumulte of euil speaking and of wrathe, but also from al gredy lustes, wherwith mans mynde is defiled: from the thornes of couetousnes from the grauell of rashenes, from the slyme of outragious lust, from the stones of pride and wilfulnes. For in dede the mynde that is burthened with thys geare, is not hable to receaue the worde of the Gospell, which knocketh in vayne at the tympane of the eares, onles it light depe in to the inwarde partes of the harte. And if it once settle in to your myndes, it shall not bee baren, but shote forthe and shewe it selfe with godly workes.

¶ And se that ye be doars of the worde and not hearers onely, deceauing your owne selues. For yf any man heare the worde, and declareth not the same by hys workes, he is like vnto a man beholdynge hys bodely face in a glasse. For assone as he hath loked on him selfe, he goeth his waye, and forgetteth immediatly what hys fashyon was. But who so loketh in the parfayt lawe of libertie, and continueth therin (yf he be not a forgetfull hearer, but a doar of the worke) the same shalbe happy in hys dede. If any man amonge you seme to be deuout and refrayneth not hys tongue, but deceaueth his owne herte, this mannes deuocion is in vayne. Pure deuociō and vndefiled before God the father, is this: to visite the fatherles and widdowes in theyr aduersytie, and to kepe hym selfe vnspotted of the worlde. The texte.

The Iewes haue their lawe by harte without boke, and yet they expresse it not in their life. The philosophers do learne perfitely the lessons howe to lyue wel, & thinke that to bee ynough, farre deceauyng them selues: where as the felicitie of manne is not in the speaking but in the lyuing. But vnto you it ought not to be ynough, that being newely instructed, you haue heard the Gospelles doc-

trine: that being baptised, you are admitted vnto the harder hidden misteries of the Gospelles doctrine: that you haue learned ouer and ouer all the whole philosophie of Christe and all hys life ⁊ ne that you haue receaued the promysse of Immortall life. That whiche Christe taught, muste bee expressed in outwarde maners: That whiche he did, muste bee folowed of vs to the vttermoste of oure possible powers. It behoueth vs to dye vnto the desires of this worlde, and be buried with hym, to rise agayne with hym vnto Innocencye, to bee caryed with him in to heauen: and finally we ought so to lyue vpon earthe, as we appeare not vnworthie the rewardes of heauen.

Will you heare, howe that he yeldeth no frute at all, whiche heareth the worde of the Gospell, but lightly and vnconsideratelye? He is moste like vnto a man that beholdeth hys face in a glasse. He beholdeth, but he doeth nothing els but beholde only. For he can not chaunge his naturall face, nether goeth he any other maner away from the glasse than he came to it. Yea inasmuch as he went only for this purpose, to see what fauour his face was of, he thinketh not of the amending of the faultes of hys fauour, but as sone as he goeth awaye from the glasse, he remembreth nothing whiche a one he sawe him selfe to be. But the glasse of the Gospelles doctrine sheweth not the blempsshes and outbreakinges of the body, but it layeth all the diseases of thy soule before thyne eies: nether doeth it only shewe them, but also healethe them. Moses lawe did rather vtter the sores of the soule than healed them. For the lawe, as concernyng the lettre, was imperfecte, and frayed menne from euyll by feare, rather than caused menne willingly to folowe the thynges that were good. But the lawe of the Gospell, obteyneth more of the wyllyng, and those that bee at lybertie through loue, than the lawe of Moses gat perforce. And the lawe of the Gospell maketh perfite that it begynneth, where the other bryngeth nothyng to perfeccyon. Whosoeuer therfore will diligently behold bothe his mynde and his life at this glasse (and that should he doe continually) neuer mouing his eies from the example and doctrine of Christe, that is to say, whosoeuer heareth the holy word, not after suche light sorte, that turnyng him self backe by and by to the cares of this worlde he seme to forget that he hearde, but frameth all hys life after the rule of it, expressing by godly workes, that which he sticked fast in the marye of the soule, he shall surely be blessed: not because he heard the worde, but because he did after it in his affeccions and maners. Thou hearest Christ saye, that the tormente of hell fyre abydeth for him, that sayeth vnto his brother: thou foole. And yet forgetting by and by what thou heardest, thou arte ready for a lyght checking worde to fight with him. Thou hearest, that those riches are to be set naught by, whiche are in daunger of mothes and theues, and that true riches ought to be layed vp in stoare in heauen: but as sone as thy backe is turned frō the preacher, thou rūnest on with al thy forcasting studies, to muckre vp ryches, (thou carest not how) by hoke or by croke, as though thou beleuedest, that godlynes should not be rewarded after this life. And if any among you thinke him selfe wonderous deuout, if he kepe hys handes from stealynge, and from fighting and other vyces, and yet for all that refrayne not hys tongue from backbyting, mysreportes, from scoldinges, from filthie talkinges, nether his harte from vncleane thinkinges: hys deuocion is vnprofitable ⁊ vnfrutefull. Perchaūce he is not punished by mans lawes, that only talketh of whoredome though he doe it not, yet he is become an whoremonger before God, that in his

mynde

minde hath cōmitted whoredōe. He suffreth no punishment of men, that coueteth an other mans good, if he may escape vnpunished: but he is giltie of thefte before God, ŷ hath conceaued thefte in his minde. We are estemed after ŷ manifest dedes before menne, for they see not the mynde. But God loketh vpon the inwarde affeccions of the mynde, and estemeth vs after them. A corrupt mynde is vsed for the moste parte to burst out in to the tongue. Among Christen people a reuiling woorde is a kynde of manslaughter, but this is playne, that true godlynes can in no wise agree with racklenes of tongue. Nether yet is it sufficiente vnto Christian religion, to haue absteyned from synnyng: it behoueth also to abounde in good workes. For in dede bonde seruauntes absteyne from doing euill, yea, for feare of punyshment, but those that are right children, it becometh to haue loue, whiche is no idle loytring matter, but effectually working, and putteth forthe it selfe frely without compulsion to doe euery good worke. But some woulde saye, what dedes than are those that make vs ryght religious in dede? Those that smell of the Iewes secte set furthe the prayse of religion, in Palles and wyde robes, in choise of meates, in washinges, in longe prayers, and other ceremonies, which are sometymes not altogether to be contemned, if by them as by signes we be warned of those thinges, whiche are the propre own matters of godlines: but thei are pernicious ware, yf a man thinke that he is made religious by meane of thē where as of them selues without exposicion, they make a man rather an hipocrite. Howbeit the obseruing of thē semeth a religious deuoute matter among men, that wickedly repose godlines in visible thinges: whiche perchaunce are signes of godlynes, but not the cause of godlynes, seing that of them selues they are nether good nor euill, onles they seme to be suche, either through custome or in the opinion of menne, where as true godlynes is in the inwarde myndes, and expresseth it selfe by farre more certaine sure signes than by ceremonies. Will you therfore heare, what is true religion with God the father, whiche esteemeth you not after the iudgement of manne? Doubtles, thys is the pure and vndefyled religyon: that like as we haue by experience proued bothe the mercie and liberall goodnes of God towardes vs, euen so muste we agayne bee bothe mercyfull and frendely liberall towardes our neighbour, and that not vpon any hope of mutuall good turne to be requited to vs agayne, but of a mere and a pure vpright loue, loking for the rewarde of our wel doing at the handes of none other but of God, whiche is contente to haue it reconed to bee done to him selfe, what so euer we bestowe for his sake vpon our brother.

He is a godly and a pure man among the Iewes, that toucheth not caryon, that is washed with quycke rennyng water: but with God he is godly and pure, that succoureth the fatherles children and wydowes in theyr trouble, that releueth hys oppreste brother, and helpeth the nedye with money. Among the Iewes he is vncleane, that eateth swynes fleshe: But with God he is vncleane, whose mynde is infected and defiled with the gredye lustes of thys worlde. But a manne will saye, what be those lustes? In the iudgement of the worlde, he is counted vile that is poore: And he the more honestlie set by, that hathe moste possession of riches, and for that cause theyr speciall carke and care is to get to themselues the moste substaunce of money. He is reconed a lowte and a hennehartted rascall, that maketh no querell whan wrong is done vnto him. He is counted a foole, that doeth a good turne for a badde. He is estemed a Joly

ruffler, that geueth him selfe to excessyue ryot: and he is counted a flyncher that foloweth sobrietie. He is taken for a gaye felowe, that swelleth in hawltynes, and loketh an heigth ouer menne of lower estimacion. He is counted happye, that hathe his matter to succede in this worlde after hys owne purpose, that floweth in delicacies and voluptuous pleasures, and serueth his paunche and glotonie. These are the thinges, that in dede make a mannes soule wicked and vncleane: and he that absteyneth from them, is a religious manne, (whosoeuer is, whosoeuer is not) in the sight of God the father, who hathe exempted vs from earthy thinges, and called vs to heauenly thynges, and from the thinges that shall perishe and are casuall, vnto the thinges that are eternall: and hathe taught vs to esteme the worthynes of manne by the thynges that are good in dede, and in all that we haue to doe, to geue respecte to none other purpose, but to hys glorye, at whose only handes the requitall of well doynges is to be trusted for. And he doeth not requite the offices of true godlynes with transitorye and sone peryshing rewardes, as thys worlde is wonte to doe, but he geueth blessednes that neuer shall dye. It is a homely person, it is a poore body, whom thou bestowest thy good turne vpō, he is not hable to requite the, but yet for al that, it is farre better to bestowe it vpon him, than vpon an other, how ryche or of how greate power so euer he be, whiche can requite no profit agayne, but a slender, one and that but for a small season: where as for the releuing of thy pore brother, Christ layeth vp in stoare life euerlasting.

The .ii. Chapter.

The texte. My brethren, esteme not the fayth of our Lord Iesus Christ the Lorde of glory, with respecte of persons. For yf there come into your company a man wearing a golden ryng, clothed in goodly apparell, and there come in also a poore manne in vyle rayment, and ye haue a respect to hym that weareth the gaye clothynge, and saye vnto him: Syt thou here in a good place: and saye vnto the poore: Stande thou there, or syt here vnder my fote stole: are ye not parcial in youre selues, and haue iudged after euyll thoughtes? Harken my deare beloued brethren. Hath not God chosen the pore of thys worlde, such as are rych in fayth, and heyres of the kyngdome, whiche he promysed to them that loue hym? But ye haue despysed the pore. Do not riche men execute tyrannye vpon you, and drawe you before the iudgement seates? Do not they speake euyll of that good name whiche is called vpon ouer you?

HE that loueth his neighbour for Goddes sake, and he that loueth God in his neighbour, doeth not in this case respecte him, because he is a man of greate power, or of riches or of nobilitie, but in that he is abundauntlie full of diuine goodes. But to thys maner of Judgement, a kyng or a riche man is not better of one Jote than any manne, howe basse or poore so euer he bee, Christe died for all indifferentlie, and all are indifferentlye called to the inherytaunce of Immortalitie. Therfore my brethren, if you doe truly put your trust in the promisses of our Lord Jesu Christ, make no difference of persones after the estimacion of worldly thinges. For Christ him selfe, as touchyng the world, was basse and poore. But yet it was the fathers will, that he shoulde be prince of all glorye. He promised the kingdome of heauen not to the wealthie but vnto the pore. Now if there come in to youre company a Joly felowe with a golde ring, or ruffling in gaye apparaill, and there come in withall a pore manne, nether wearing ring on hys fyngers, and clothed in pore homely araye, and by

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and by you caste your eies upon the riche man, for none other respecte but that he obscureth the pore manne with hys gorgious rayment, and geue hym the more honourable place, saying: *Sytte thou here VVell*: And agayne you saye unto the pore manne as though you lothed him, and for no cause elles but for his ouer homely apparaill: *Stande thou there, or sitte thou there, under my fote stole*: would not your harte by and by grudge and secretly condemne your doing, in that through flattery you attribute unto golde and galaunte aray, the honour that is due unto vertue, contemnyng him for lacke of those thinges, whiche is muche more acceptable to God for the true riches of the soule, than that riche manne? The riche mannes fynger glisteryng with the ring and precious stone, and his bodye decked in silke, maketh you to regarde hym: and doe not you regarde the pore man for hys syncerite of faythe, modestie of mynde, sobrenes, chastitie and other giftes of vertue, whiche make a man greate and gorgious in dede? Why doeth your iudgement disagree from the iudgement of God? Heare me indifferently, my welbeloued brethren, the thyng that euidentlie appeareth matter in dede to be certaynly true. How muche so euer the worlde setteth by the ryche, God hym selfe hathe preferred the poore, the poore (I meane) after the worlde, whiche nether haue nor seke after autoritie nor kingdomes in this world. God hathe let alone the riche with their statelynes, and chosen these, which are but sely pore folkes for lacke of present substaunce, but yet riche and mightye in the lokynge for the kyngdome of heauen, and theuerlastynge enherytaunce, in that they put their truste in hym that promysed them, whiche nether can deceaue if he woulde, and is hable to performe what he will. But unto whome hathe he promised this wonderfull felicitie? to kinges and wealthy folkes? no in dede, but to them whiche loue him truly, who soeuer they bee whether they be bonde seruauntes, or free men, whether they be riche or poore. And you hauing desired the riche manne to the highest seate, and appoyntyng the pore man to the lowe fotestoles, haue preferred hym whome God setteth the lesse by, and contemned him that in the sight of God is bothe rich and honourable. He hathe honour done unto him, that perchaunce hauyng gotten hys ryches by fraude or rauine, auaunceth himselfe: and this is contemned, whiche had rather be poore, than with losse of godlynes to bee riche: and hauing spent up his riches to the releuing of the pore, is become poore of hys owne accorde, that he myght bee riche in godlynes. In dede euery one is not ungodly that is riche, not withstanding the riche of this worlde are not very rashe in agreeing with the godlynes of the Gospell, but they be of that kynde of men moste chiefly, that repugne the Gospell of Christe. For who are they that practice tyranny against you for malice of godlynes? are they not the riche menne? who are they that accuse you and drawe you before Iudgement seates? are they not the riche for the moste parte? Who are they that speake euill and curse the holy name of our lorde Iesu Christe, by Inuocacion wherof you haue atteyned saluacyon, and in whom you reioyce? Are they not the riche? Yea they hate your profession so muche, that the name, whiche geueth saluacion and is honourable unto you, is euen deathe and abominable unto them. But the profession of this name is begonne to be healthesome unto you, so as for all that, you may through your owne faulte, fall from the saluacion that is promised.

¶ If ye fulfull the royall lawe, according to the scripture. Thou shalt loue thyne neighbour as thy self, ye do well. But yf ye regarde one person more then another, ye commit sinne. The texte.

mit synne, & are rebuked of the whole lawe, as transgressoures. Who soeuer shall kepe the lawe, and yet fayle in one poynt, he is giltie of all. For he that sayde: Thou shalt not commit adulterye, sayde also: thou shalt not kyl. Though thou do no adultery, yet if thou kil, thou arte become a traunsgressour of the lawe. So speake ye, and so do, as they that shalbe iudged by the lawe of libertye. For he shal haue iudgement without mercy, that sheweth no mercy: and mercie reioyseth against iudgement.

A kynge promiseth rewarde, yea, but to him that in his dedes accomplysheth the lawe royall: wherof no man can be ignoraunte, seing it was expresse in writing long agooe, and it is on this maner: *Thou shalt loue thy neighboure as thy selfe.* Doeth he loue his neighbor after this rule, that preferreth the wicked rych manne before the godly pore man? The lawe of the Gospell is the lawe of loue: and what soeuer is done contrary to it, although it be not forbydden by speciall name, yet it is synne: and that lawe doeth secretly reproue you, which hath commaũded al men, and in al thinges, that thou oughtest to loue thy neyghbour as thy selfe. Who soeuer swarueth from this rule, is a conuicte transgressour of the lawe. Nether yet let any manne curry fauell with him selfe after this wise: *The faute is but light*, the law is broken in nothing but in this parte. But the law of the Gospell is suche a lawe, that except it be kept in euery parte wholy, it semeth to be broken all togethe on euery parte. Forinasmuche as the totall summe of all the whole lawe is conteyned in the loue of God & of the neighbour, who soeuer he be, that swarueth from charitie, which is the rote of all the whole lawe, he hathe doubtles broken the whole lawe, and offended the autor of the lawe: vnto whome he is become giltie of all, in that he, whiche hathe erred from the right marke of the whole lawe, appeareth as muche as in him is, that he will erre, as ofte as occasion is offred. As a man that walketh in the darke, careth not whether he goo oute of the waye on the right hande or on the lefte, so is he disposed to all manner of errour, that hathe once swarued out of the light. Therfore he ÿ hath through flatterie preferred the vndeseruing rich man before the deseruing pore man, forasmuche as he hathe in thys behalfe broken the lawe of loue: he is cousen germayn to all naughtynes, that is commonly done againste the loue of the neyghbor. Nether doeth he lyghtly offende God, that is so hardy to defile his lawe in any parte. He that ones commaunded charitie, did with lyke diligence ones forbydde what so euer is repugnaunte againste the loue of the neyghboure. For the selfe same that gaue thys lawe, *Committe no VVhoredome*: ordayned thys, *Do no murther*. And if thou absteyne from whoredome, and yet committeste murther: haste thou not than broken all the whole lawe, in that thou hast broken it in one parte? The self same one God forbad bothe, and forebad them for all one cause, that is to saye, because they are againste the loue of the neyghbour. But he hath not only forbydden those thinges, whiche are punnyshed by lawes, as thefte, murther, and whoredome, but all manner of thinges vtterly, that are contrary to the loue of the Gospell. The lawe of Moses would not punnyshe him, that estemed lesse the soft sprited pore manne, than the proude stately riche manne, or him that would wishe euil to his neyghbour: But yet the lawe of the Gospell punnysheth him. Therfore according to the rule of it, frame not only your dedes but also al your cõmunication and the thoughtes of youre harte, that there be nothinge at any tyme, that varieth from the loue of the neyghbour. Loue is the lawe of libertie, not that it is lawfull to synne by meanes of it, but in that the euangelical loue cau-

seth

seth the wyllyng to do of theyr owne accorde, the thynge that mannes lawes constrayne the vnwyllyng to doe perforce, for feare of peynes. Accordynge to thys lawe therfore frame all youre life, forsomuche as you shall receyue moste high rewarde if you accomplyshe that whiche is prescribed vnto you: and contrary wyse you shall suffre moste greuous sore punishmentes, in case you ones fall from hym, of whome all the whole lawe dependeth. You are frely pardoned of the transgressions of your former lyfe. The gifte of the heauenly spryrite is frely geuen you, by whome you are not onely reconsiled vnto God, but also glued together in mutuall charitie. The more it is geuen vnto you, and is frely geuen without your deseruinges, so muche the more sharpely shall they bee punnyshed whiche hauinge experyence in them selues of so exceadynge greate mercy of God, doe not shew them selues agayne gentil and mercifull towardes theyr neyghbour. With what countenaunce shall he aske mercye of God the iudge, whiche being a seruaunt sheweth hym selfe vnmercifull towardes hys felowe seruaunt? with what mouthe shall he desire to be loued of God, whiche doeth not loue hys neyghbour? if thou wilt obteyne iudgement myngled with mercy, loke thou shewe thy selfe mercifull towardes thy neyghbour, whether he be a trespasser or be in necessitie. And in dede it is better to decline in to thys parte, to leane vnto mercy than vnto iudgement. For inasmuch as it is almost altogether of the mercye of God that we haue, rather than of his righteousnes, we ought to endeuour, that we maye rather fynde God mercifull than seuerely strayte. He hathe saued vs by hys mercye: it is reason also that we be more ready to mercye towardes our neighbour, than vnto straytenes: For there are many moo wonne by softenes, gentylnes, and lyberall goodnes, than with strayte straungenes: that mercy aduauncing it selfe aboue iudgement, maye triumphe in thys behalfe, that those whiche hauinge the experience of iudgement, shoulde haue perysshed, are saued through the benefite of mercy. There is none of vs but he falleth daily, and shall finde God such a one in condemnyng his faultes, a... expresseth him selfe towardes his brother.

What auayleth it my brethren, though a manne saye he hathe faythe, yf he haue no dedes? Can faythe saue hym? If a brother or a sister be naked and destitute of dayly fode, and one of you saye vnto them: departe in peace, God sende you warmnes and fode, notwithstandynge ye geue them not those thynges whiche are nedefull to the bodye, what shall it helpe? Euen so, faythe (if it haue no dedes) is dead in it selfe. But some manne wil saye: thou hast faythe, and I haue dedes, shewe my thy faythe by thy dedes: and I wyll shewe the my fayth by my dedes. Beleuest thou that there is one God? Thou doest well. The deuyls also beleue, and tremble. But wilt thou vnderstande (O thou vayne manne) that faythe without dedes is dead? Was not Abraham oure father iustified thorow workes, when he had offred Isaac hys sonne vpon the aulter? Thou seest howe that faythe wrought with his dedes, & through the dedes was the faith made perfect: & the scripture was fulfylled, whiche sayeth: Abraham beleued God, and it was reputed vnto hym for rightewesnes: and he was called the frende of God. Ye se then howe that of dedes a man

is iustifyed, and not of faythe onely. Likewise also was not Raab the harlot iustyfyed thorow workes, when she had receaued the messagers, and had sent them out another waye? For as the bodye without the spirite is dead, euen so faythe without workes is dead also.

Is it to be thought, that the only profession of faythe, is ynough of it selfe to obteyne saluacion? what is faythe without charytye? Charitie is a lyuely thing, it ceasseth not, it is not idle, it expresseth it selfe with good dedes dooing, wheresoeuer it is present. And if they want, my brethren, shall the vayne name of faythe (I praye you) saue a manne. The faythe is fruteles, that worketh not by charitie, yea it is no faythe but in title only. That which I haue sayed, shall more clerely appeare by conference of an example. If a manne geue fayre wordes to a brother or a syster, that wanteth clothynge or dayly sustenaunce, and saye: Goe your waye in peace, get you heate, and get youre bely full of meate, and for all his so sayíng, geueth none of those thynges that the bodye hathe nede of, is not thys mannes fayre speakynge vnprofytable to the pore nedye folkes? They shall starue for colde, or bee an hungred for al hys fayre tale that releueth not theyr necessitie. He releueth thé in his word of mouth, but with his dede he doeth nothing at al. Of like sorte doubtles shall the profession of faith, whiche consisteth only in worde and worketh nothynge in dede, bee vnauayleable, but lyeth slugging like as it were deade, nether is it to bee called faythe any more, than a deade corps of a manne is worthye to be called a manne. The thinge that the soule is vnto the body, the same is charitie vnto faythe: so that if charitie be taken awaye, the worde of faythe is but a dead matter and vneffectuall. Nether shall it do the any more good before God to professe an idle faythe with thy mouthe, than fayre wordes do vnto the poore neighbour, where he ought to be holpen with dede. They thynke they are mocked, whan a manne sayeth vnto them: get you heate, get youre bely full of meate, whan they haue nether clothe nor meate geuen them. Euen so he semeth to mocke God, that rehearseth euery daye: *I beleue in God, I beleue in God*, whan he sheweth no tokens of faythfull belefe. Like as he hath an vnprofitable charitie, that loueth but from the lippes forewarde, euen so hathe he a vayne faithe, that beleueth not but in worde only. Nowe perchaunce some one starteth out, that gooeth about to disseuer the thinges, that by nature are moste faste ioyned together, and of whom nether can be disseuered from the other, and sayeth: Thou haste fayth, I haue dedes, let vs bothe be contented with hys owne porcion. Let thy faythe suffice the, it is ynough for me to haue good dedes. And yet nothers porcion shalbe sufficient for him. Thou boastest of faythe, and if thou haue true ryght faythe, it is requisite that thou declare it wyth thy dedes: yf thou haue a deade faythe, thou arte neuer the better for it. Thou crackest of thy dedes, and yet they are not sufficient to get the crown of immortalitie, onles they procede of charitie, whiche is an vnseperable companyon of faith, that bringeth saluacion. The thing that flowers and boughes are in a tree, the same are the offices of charitie in vs: whiche if they breake forthe in theyr tyme, they declare that the tree rote is quycke, by whose sappe they are norysshed.

Therfore

Therfore this is the whole profite of good dedes, if they bee not done upon vaynegloryr, not for thanke at mannes handes, not for feare, or shame, and not upon hope of lucre, but of a lyuely faythe, whiche hathe perswaded us, that, that is geuen unto God, what so euer is geuen for hys sake unto our neyghbour, and that the rewarde is to be hoped after at none other hande but of him. Thou pleasest thy selfe, in that thou art perswaded that there is but one God, where as the errour of the paynymes beleueth ther bee innumerable Goddes. Thou doest ryght, for in thys behalfe thou excellest them. Howbeit it doeth the no good at all to beleue there is God, & that there is but one God, onles thou so beleue, that thou shalt of hym obteyne saluacion. But that shalt thou not dooe, excepte thou couple charytie unto faythe, and testifye by thy godly woorkes that thou bothe beleuest hym, and that thou louest hym. If thou beleue there is God, beleue also that he is the author of saluacyon, beleue hys promyses: and lyue after suche sorte, that thou mayest appeare to be worthye of hys promyses. He hathe promysed mercye, yea, but unto them that in thys worlde exercise mercye towardes theyr neyghbour. He hathe promysed eternall life, yea but to them that despyse the pleasures of thys worlde. Thys shalt thou not only beleue, there is but one god, but thou shalt also repose al thy whole trust in hym only: or elles what fruite shalt thou haue of thy beleuynge? The deuilles do also beleue, that God is, they beleue that Jesus is the sonne of God, and beleue it so muche, that they tremble and quake. But forasmuche as they beleue onelye, and loue hym not, they are afrayed of punnyshment at his hande, and hope not after rewarde: and where they fele hym to bee ryghteous, they are not woorthye to fele mercye seynge they are cruell agaynste others. But and if thou be so very a fole, that thou yet standest in thyne owne conceate hauing but a vayne faythe: gooe to, I shall brynge the forthe a more famylyar and a more knowen example, to teache the, that the faythe, whiche woorketh not through loue, is unprofitable and deade. Abraham, of whome as oure head auncetour, we moste chyeflye make vaunte, deserued the fyrste and pryncypall commendacyon of faythe with God, of whome the reputacyon of ryghteousnes was attrybuted unto hym: but in hym faythe was not unfrutefully baren. For he did not onely professe with hys mouthe that he trusted in Goddes promysses, but also he doubted not to laye hys onlye sonne Isaac upon thaultar and slea hym at Goddes commaundement, whereas after the ordre of nature, there coulde no posterytie bee trusted upon to hym by anye other: but he laying hold on the promises of God, whome he knew could raise euen the dead agayn to lyfe at hys pleasure, sticked not to do that he was commaunded. So that of his dedes he deserued the cōmendacion of righteousnes, yea but of those dedes that proceded of faith. For ther are also workes of Moses law, wherunto they trust in vayne, that are without the faith of the gospel. What is it, that that noble patriarke would not haue done, seing he went readily & chearfully to the sleaynge of hys only sonne Isaac, whome he loued so muche the more tenderlye, because he was borne in hys extreme olde age, and because that lucky posterytye was promised in his name? He was pronounced righteous, euen be-

fore he did the sacryfyce, yea, but of God that knewe the olde mannes lyuely workynge faythe woulde refuse nothynge, if occasyon were offred. Therfore bothe the matters dyd helpe eyther other. Faythe encouraged hym, not to feare to offre vp hys sonne, whome he doubted not shoulde by the commaundemente of Goddes power, by and by lyue agayne: but the notable dede set vpon, as it were, the fynall furnyture of the matter, declarynge vnto menne also, that Abrahams stedfaste faythe was neyther a deade nor a commune faithe. For he nother fayneth, nor doubteth, whiche stackreth not to auenture in hys onely sonne whome he loued so syngularly. Woulde it greue hym to set naught by money for Christes sake, that is readye to leade hys sonne, whome the father loued dearlier than he did hym selfe, vnto death? So than of thys so notable a document of faythe it manifestly appeareth to bee perfite, that the scripture sayed: Abraham beleued God, and it was reckoned vnto hym for righteousnes, and was called the frende of God. And if Abraham should haue lost the frute of faithe and the commendacion of righteousnes, if he had grudged at Goddes commaundement to offre vp his sonne: shall his faythe auaile him, that at Goddes commaundement grudgeth to geue a cote to hys neyghbour that starueth for colde, and that grudgeth to geue meate to the hungrye, and drinke to the thurstye, as though God would suffre him to perishe for cold or hungre, that geueth somwhat of hys substaunce to releue hys brothers necessitie? And if the commendacion of righteousnes chaunced not to them of the olde tyme, but to suche as tryed their faythe by theyr dedes: muche lesse is it to be trusted vpon vnto them, that professe the lawe of perfite charitie. But mercie and liberalitie to the neyghbour is so muche auayleable with God, that a woman, that an harlot, that a straunger was commended for keping of hospitalitie, and deserued to be nombred in the regestre of Godly people, in the regestre of citezens, and in the regestre of the moste tryedlye proued Patriarkes. Rhahab was not a Jewe, she was maystres of a howse of baldrye, and gate her lyuyng with no very honest gaynes of occupyyng: and yet in Goddes boke she hathe a worthye commendacion of righteousnes: not of faythe only, in that she was persuaded that no mannes good dedes should be loste, God being the rewarder, namely that is bestowed vpon good folkes or at least in the respecte of God: but of that, that she not regarding the daunger of her life, prouided to saue the life of the spies, in that she sent out the messangers, whom the guide of ye Jewes had sente to spye, by stealth an other way, lest they should perish. She might haue come in no smal fauour with her own coũtrey folkes, if she had (as it was in her hande to haue done) betrayed the spyes. But she had rather serue the wyll of God, than her own gayne: nether dystrusted she, but that she should bee repayed a more plenteous rewarde of hym, than of menne.

Likewise than as Abraham had the worthy praise of righteousnes, not of naked faithe but of faythe tried by dedes, euen so Rhahab had beleued in vayne that the God of the Jewes is the true very God, excepte, whan occasion serued, she had declared by her dedes, that she had beleued with her whole harte: otherwise faythe (as I sayed) that is colde of charitie, and vttreth not it selfe, whan

matter

matter requireth, it is verely no faythe at all, but only a vayne name of faithe. For like as the body being destitute of the soule is dead and unprofitable, euen so faithe, if it want workyng charitie, is dead and uneffectuall.

The.iii.Chapter.

My brethren, be not euery man a maister, knowyng howe that we shall receaue the greater damnacion: for in many thinges we synne all. If a manne synne not in worde, the same is a perfecte man, and able also to rame all the bodye. Beholde, we put byttes into the horses mouthes, that they may obey us, and we turne about all the body of them. Beholde also the shippes whiche though they be so greate, and are dryuen of fearce windes, yet are they turned about with a very smal helme whyther soeuer the violence of the gouernour wyl. Euen so the tongue is a lytell membre also, and boasteth greate thynges. The texte.

Greate is the profitablenes of a mannes tongue, if a man teache those thynges that pertaine to true godlynes, but it is a perilous pece of worke to take thoffice of a teacher in hande: and fyrste it requireth that a manne bee excellently learned in the thynges that concerne the doctrine of the gospell, and than to be of moste pure affections: it is not ynough for euery man to teache uprightly, but for him that respecteth nothing elles but to the glorye of God. Such a teacher like as he may do very much good, if he loue that he teacheth, euen so whose doctrine is corrupte, or whose mynde is corrupt with wicked desires, with hatred, yre, desire of reuengemēt, couetousnes, ambicion, or lecherous lustes, he occupieth the roume of a teacher to the greate marring of the people. Therfore my brethren, couet not euery where to be maisters. It is more sure to herken than to speake. And a few teachers are ynow to instructe many. Therfore he that taketh upon hym the rowme of a byshop, and of a teacher, muste often and manye tymes examyne him selfe, whether he be mete to take that charge in hande; and let hym thinke thys specially with him selfe, that he taketh a trauaile in hande endaungered with myghtie peryl, and shall rendre a moste streyght reconyng to the moste highe Judge, if he teache otherwise than becometh him. For hys doctryne throweth abrode hys venime, so muche the more wyder and periloustier, in that it is set forthe by autorite of a speaker. And there is nothyng of more difficultie, than in euery poynt so to tempre the tongue, that it neuer speake amysse. For in asmuche as the infirmytie of mannes nature is suche, that there is no manne but he dayly doeth amysse in many thynges, if anye manne canne auoyde all escapes of the tongue, he maye be thought a perfite and a mete manne to gouerne the whole bodye, as it were with the brydle of reason, after that he hathe bene hable to restrayne that moste slyppery membre, that it offende not.

From thys daunger he is farther of, that had rather beare the rowme of a scholar than of a teacher. It is somwhat to rule the bely, it is not nothynge to tempre the eyes and the eares, it is somwhat to refrayne the handes: but of all other it is the most harde matter, to gouerne the tongue perfitely. The tongue is a small membre: yea, but yet the whole bodye dooeth almoste all together depende of it. The speche of a man is a certayn effectuous and an excellent thyng

of importaunce, either to the profite or to the destroying of many. It pearceth into the myndes of the hearers, it engraffeth or bryngeth forthe noysome opinions, it stereth vp or aswageth displeasures, it moueth vnto bataille, it draweth vnto peace, and it strayneth the hearer to thys waye or that waye. So we do put brydles in horses mouthes, that they maye obey vs, and with a small bytte we turne about yͤ horses whole bodye at our owne pleasure. The thing that the brydled mouthe is to the sitter, the same is the tamed tongue vnto the manne. You see what houge weyghtie substaunce the shippes be of: they, where as whan the sayles are spredde abroade, are carryed on the waters with a wonderous violence of wyndes, yet are they turned about with a very litell stearne whither so euer the shippe maisters mynde that gouerneth the rother will set it. He dryueth the stearne by a sleyght, and that so great a weyghtie substaunce, is gouerned of the leaste parte of it. Therfore the temperate gouernaunce of the tongue is not to be contenned. It is a small membre, yea, but it is a swellinge membre and ful of bragges, and entermyngleth destruccion wyde and broade, and stereth vp myghty tumultes: onles it bee restrayned by the brydle of the mynde, it setteth all people and all kyngdomes together by the eares one with an other.

The texte. ¶ Beholde, how great a thyng a lytell fyre kyndleth, and the tongue is fyre, euen a worlde of wyckednesse. So is the tonge set amonge oure members, that it defyleth the whole body, and setteth a fyre all that we haue of nature, and is it selfe set a fyre euen of hell. All the natures of beastes, & of byrdes, and of serpentes, and thynges of the sea are meked and tamed of the nature of man. But the tonge can no man tame. It is an vnruely euyl, full of deadly poyson. Therewith blesse we God the father, and therwith curse we men, whiche are made after the (ymage and) similitude of God. Oute of one mouth proceadeth blessyng & cursyng. My brethren, these thinges ought not so to be. Doeth a fountayne sende forth at one place swete water & bytter also? Can the fyggetre (my brethre,) beare olyue beryes: eyther a vyne beare figges? So can no fountayne geue bothe salt water and freshe also. If eny man be wise and endued with knowledge amonge you, let hym shew hys workes oute of good conuersacyon with mekenesse of wysedome. But yf ye haue bytter enuying and stryfe in your hert, reioyce not: nether be lyars against the trueth. For suche wysdome descendeth not from aboue: but is earthy, naturall, and deuelyshe. For where enuying and stryfe is, there is vnstablenes, and all maner of euyll workes. But the wysedome that is from aboue, is fyrste pure, then peaccable, gentil, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruites, without iudgeing, without symulacion: yea, and the frute of ryghtewesnes is sowen in peace, of them that mayntayne peace.

Wyll ye marke a very lyke example. Beholde howe litell fyre kyndleth a myghtye greate violence of matter. Wherof cometh that horrible and broade flasshing flame of fyre? It sprong of one litel sparke. And at the begynnyng it myght haue ben holden down with a very litel a doo, but whan it is negligently let alone, it gathereth strength on euery parte, & groweth so farre at length, that it can be suppressed by no force. And like as the vse of fyre is greate and profitable sondry wayes, if it bee rightly occupied, and a principall destruccion, if it bee suffred to spreade whither it will: euen so out of a mānes tongue is very greate profite, and out of the same is extreme destruccion of mannes life. Doe you not see that he, whiche wrought nature, ment the same by sygnificacion, in that he would haue mannes tongue to be bothe of the maner and colour of fyre, and to be warblinge and turnynge as the flame of fire is? And yet there is not in this membre a single playne euyll, as is almost in the other membres. It is a worlde and a heape of all vices. For like as a very litell sparke is, as it

were, the breeder of all the whole flame: euen so what euil so euer is in this life, it procedeth out of an euil tongue as out of a worlde. And like as a litel fyre is mingled with a greate rooke of fewell, so that by lytel and litell it setteth al the whole rooke on fyre: euen so the tongue is so mixed with the other membres of the body, that, if it be not restrained, it infecteth and defileth with his poyson al the whole body, & enflameth al the life of mā with al maner flames of vices, frō his cradle eue stil to his last age. Yet the violence of this mischeyf was not geuē vnto the tongue by nature: whiche hathe geuen monicion by the empaled compasse of the teethe and lippes, that the vse of the tongue ought circumspectely to be loked to and moderated: but it is set on fyre of the fyre of hell, wherof the mynde is fyrste infected by wicked spirites, & the poyson of the mynde, through the instrument of the tongue, breaketh out more and more, and maketh a man of naught to be starke naught, and the poyson doeth also corrupte other with his contagiousnes, so as that miserable myschief can not possible be restrained by no force, nor by no reason. What thinge is there in the worlde so vncurable, that mans diligence can not make tame by some maner of meane? There is no wylde beaste so wylde, no fowle so combrous, no serpente so noysome, no lyuing thinge of the sea so vnruly, but it maye bee made gentyll by mannes witte and cherishing. Lyons are made tame, Tigres and dragons are made gentyll, Elephantes also are made to do seruice, Crocodiles are made tame, serpentes are made meke, eagles and gripes are made familiare, delphines also are allured to be louing. And yet was there neuer any meane, nor crafte founde of mortall manne, that coulde tame an vntemperate tongue, whereas there hathe ben both in tymes past tamed and is tamed euery day, al kinde of thinges that beareth life: as many as are vpō earth, as many as are in the sea, as many as be in the ayre: and this myschieuous membre, the tongue, is so farre outragiously wylde, and violent: nether is it vnruly only, but also drenched with deadly poyson. Lyons do theyr hurt with theyr clawes and teethe, but yet they haue no venome. Adders are armed with venome, but yet they haue nother clawes ne hornes. The only tongue is noysome two maner of wayes, bothe in vntameable madde wildenes, and deadly venome, in that it styngeth afarre of whom it will, where the scorpions hurte none but those whome they strike with thende of theyr tayle, and the adders hurte none but with thrusting in theyr small piped toothe.

And yet this poyson were lesse dreadfull, if it were syngle and noysome but one only waye. But nowe the myschief is after sondrye sortes, and turneth it selfe in to all maner of kynde, that it may the more sore and the more easyly doo harme, and doeth oftentymes the more harme, whan it maketh an outwarde shewe of goodnes. There is nothynge better, nothyng of more regarde with al men than godlynes. In pretence therof it dooeth harme the moste specyally, whan it myngleth those thynges, whiche can not agree in one together. For he can not bee godly towardes god, that is cruell and a cursed speaker agaynste hys neyghbour. And yet notwithstandyng with the same instrument we prayse God, calling him father, & with the same we checke and mysreporte our neighbour, whiche was made after the likenes of God. With the tongue we syng to God the autor of all goodnes, whan with the same we vexe, through extreme sorowes, man as though his reproche perteyned not to God that made him.

God is nother made more honest with our prayses, ne hurt wit our euil spea-

kynges. Man maye be vnto man ether noysome or hollsom. And what we doe to man, God reconeth the same to belong vnto him. Therfore lette no man beleue, that God doeth accepte his prayses, which he speaketh with hys tongue & not with his harte, whan he spueth out with the same tongue the poison of cursed speaking agaynste his neighbour. For what is more contrary repugnaunt, than praise and dispraise? and yet matters of so great diuersitie procede all out of one mouth: and in dede they are vsed among the vngodly. Among you that haue professed the plain singlenes of the Gospel, it behoueth not that these thinges be after the same maner done, for it is shame for you to sounde otherwise with the tongue, than the harte thynketh: seyng you haue learned to loue God in your neighbour, and your neighbour in God: and seing you haue learned that no manne ought to be hurt with the raungeing nicenes of the tongue, so much that you are bydden after thexample of Christ, to speake well of them, whiche speake shamefully of you. Truly he is the lesse hurtfull, that is playnly and without conterfaicte dissembling naught. But cursed speaking set out in the Image of godlynes, what is it elles than the poyson of humlocke myred with wyne? so that the venome is the more presently strong, in that it is myngled with a moste hollsome matter. They haue in theyr mouthe, *Lorde haue mercie*, whan *they* them selues cruelly rage agaynste theyr brother. They haue in their mouthe *Our father*, whan they continually with the sting of theyr tongue wound theyr neighbour, for whose saluacions sake Christ was wou̅ded. They speake muche of the goodnes of God, that by hys owne clemencie saued man, whereas they goe hastyly aboute to dispatch a manne with the venome of theyr tongue. They talke faste of the goodnes of Christe to mannekynde warde, whan they contrary to thexample of Christe, sharpen theyr tongues agaynste theyr owne euen Christened. They aduaunce and praise the softenes of Christe, in that he gently answered those that reuiled him, whan they with theyr lyes assault him that doth them good. They professe them selues the messagiers and preachers of Christe, whan they are very instrumentes of the deuill. They promyse the sede of heauenly doctrine, whan they sowe the mere poyson of the herbe Achonite. And these thinges being of so sondry a diuersitie, they not only do with all one tongue, but many tymes also out of all one pulpit, begynnyng with praysyng of God, they burst out in to the slau̅deryng of theyr neyghbour, and infect the myndes of the multitude so muche the more perniciously, that through a feyned shewe of relygion, they couer and dissemble the deadly poyson, whiche they thruste oute of an infected harte by the instrument of the tongue. I praye you brethren dooeth not this seme like condicioned to a monstre? There are welles that flowe with hollsome waters, there are welles, whome to taste vpon, it were deadly poyson: there are that powre swete water and good to drinke of: again there are that geue bytter water and salte. Nether may it seme maruayle, seing that the moysture runnyng through diuerse vaynes, sauoureth of the lyme, alome, brymstone, or other metal, or of the swete ground. But how chaunceth it, that seing the communicacion procedeth out of all one harte, seynge it floweth through all one tongue, it can be so farre vnlike it selfe, where among so many differences of wellspringes, there is none founde, that can bringe forth bothe swete and sowre water at once all at one mouth? Dooeth one selfe same tree bring forth frute of so̅dry tastes? Marke my brethren, doeth the figtree (being swete by nature) bring forth bitter ryupe beryes? Dooeth the vyne tree bryng

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forthe fygges? No: but every frute is lyke vnto hys owne tree, and hathe the verdour of the Juyce of hys owne rote. Dooeth it not therfore seme to bee lyke a monstre, that all one manne shoulde powre out of all one mouthe and through all one tongue, bothe godlynes and wickednes, trueth and lyeng, saluacion and destruccion? Therfore seing there is nothing more hurtfull than a wicked tongue, and nothyng more healthfull than a good and a learned tongue, and seing the manne is seldome founde, that can governe thys membre in all poyntes, that manne ought with all diligent endevour to be chosen out of many, that muste take in hande the travaille of a teacher. Hym it behoueth to haue bothe a mynde quiet from all tumulte of gredye lustes, and a conuersacion dyuorced from all vncleanes, that he maye not only teache those thynges, that concerne true godlynes, but also to teache them with all gentilnes. For that doctrine that is contencious and wrangling, engendreth nothyng elles, but faccions and fallyng out. And amonge the wise of thys worlde, he beareth the bell, that disputeth with moste stiffenes in opinions, and that is so busye tongued, that he geueth place to no bodye. Nether is thys done, that the hearer may be the better whan he goeth away, but that he that getteth the maistry maye be the prowder, and he that is ouercomen maye be the more lowted. And in the meane season the commune sorte is at disagreyng amonge them selues, some after thys mynde some after that, so as nether the speaker can haue any sure grounded frute, ne yet the hearer. But among you that professe the philosophy of the Gospell, who so euer is truly wise, and endued with true wisedom, let hym not declare hym selfe wyse in hyghe stately and contencious maner of reasonyng, but let hym testifie by goldy and entier vpright maners, what he is, rather than in wordes. For lyke as faith is vnprofitable, like as charitie is vnprofitable, that is doone but only in wordes, euen so is wisedome, whiche doeth not fyrste trye it selfe by gentilnes of maners. For this is the chiefe token, wherby a manne may knowe the humayne phylosophy from the Euangelical. The professours of humayne philosophye are curious, stiffe in opynyon, and fearce. But the philosophie of the Gospell, the more syncere it is, the more excellent it is, so muche lesse high statelynes it hathe. And the chief power of it consisteth, not in subtill reasonynges of syllogismes, or tricked fyne termes of eloquence, but in syncerite of life, in softenes of maners, that geueth place to contencious persones, and allureth suche as are apte to be taught, nether respecteth it any thing elles than the health of the hearers. It is an heauenly wisedome, and he that teacheth it, muste necessaryly haue a mynde cleane scowred from all earthlye lustes, for it muste nedes be drawen forthe of a syncere cleane vessell. But if you haue myndes defiled with bitter enuying amonge your selues, if you haue an harte corrupt with contencious, and with stubburne ymagynyng to haue the vpper hande, and with enuye: lay awaye rather the office of teaching, than in seruing your owne glory and contencious maner, to lye againste the Gospelles veritie, whiche no manne can set forthe syncerely, onles hys mynde bee free from all humayne affeccions. Therfore, who so euer taketh this profession in hande, if he fele hys mynd infecte with humayne loue or hate, if with malicious crueltie, desire of renowme, gredy coueting of money or with loue of uoluptuous pleasures: let him fyrste diligently purge the inward partes of hys mynde, that he maye goe pure vnto the teachyng of that moste pure doctrine. Or elles they that styppe ouer those thynges that make rightly

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vnto godlynes, and obiecte mystie smokes of doubtfull questions: they that speake to come into the fauour of Princes: they that saye for theyr owne aduauntage: they that wrest the doctrine of the Gospel vnto theyr owne bely busines: they that hunte after the vayne prayses of menne: they that laye an heauye burthen vpon other mennes shoulders, and will not once touch it wt theyr own fyngre: those that in stede of Goddes commaundementes, teache the ceremonies and constitucions of menne: they that in stede of the Gospelles philosophie, set forthe a new Iewship: finally they that preach them selues rather than Christ: those mennes wisedome is not that wisedome, whiche the father sent downe vnto vs by hys sonne from aboue, to call vs from the studie of earthely thynges, and to exalte vs vp to heauen: but it is a grosse fleshye wysedome and an earthye, and therfore it sauoureth of the earthe: yea it is a sensuall wisedome, and therfore it respecteth more those thynges that are auayleable vnto thys lyfe, than vnto the life euerlastyng: yea it is a deuelyshe wisedome, for it is not of thynspyracyon of the spyryte of God, but of the instygacyon of deuylles, which suggeste those thynges, that maye estraunge vs from the syncerytie of the Gospell. Among the professours of worldly wisedome, you see, how great enuy, what braullynges, what fallyng out, what forcasting to haue the vpper hande, what greate inconstauncye of opynyons and maners, and in the meane season all the whole life, how it is defiled with all kinde of vicious naughtines. But contrary wise, our wisdome, whiche procedeth from aboue of the spirite of Christ, is fyrst chaste & pure, defiled with no wicked affections: Than it is peaceable, and abhorreth from all studie of contencion. Moreouer it is modeste, & not ouerthwarte: besydes this it is tractable & curteous, not grudging to geue place vnto hym that teacheth better: it is full of compassion and mercyfull towarde them that are fallen and deceaued, & them it studieth rather to saue than spil, gently bearyng with them, & assaying euery way to bring them to amendemēt: it is full of good frutes, in that it neuer ceasseth doing good for al men, cōuerting the vngodlye to godlynes, callyng againe them that goe astraye, teaching the vntaught, releuing them yt are fallen, pricking forewarde the slouthfull, & comforting the sorowfully afflicted. Nether in the meane while dooeth it damne any body, for it is more forcasting to heale than to dāne, hauing no maner of counterfaict ne simulacion, but of an vpright syncere mind wishing wel to all. After this sorte they that sowe the pure and quiet doctrine of the Gospell, doo both reape vnto them selues the frute of euerlastyng lyfe, and bryng other to the studye of the heauenly life, whome with theyr striuinges and crueltye they shoulde haue caste awaye.

The worldely wisedome hathe also a frute of hys owne, but this is either a vayne frute or a deathe bryngyng frute. But the frute of ryghteousnes, that geueth bothe innocencie in this worlde, and afterwarde immortalitie, is not sowed by contencion, but in concorde and peace, vnto them that embrace peace. For it is not the parte of a good teacher, maliciously to skirmish with them that seme more obstinate, than that they will obey the doctrine of the Gospell. Those it is better for hym to leaue vnto theyr owne stubburnes, in case there bee no hope that they wyll comme to amendemente.

The .iiii. Chapter.

From whence commeth warre, and fyghtyng among you? come they not here hence? euen of your lustes, that fyght in youre membres? ye luste, & haue not, ye enuye and haue indignacyon, and cannot obtayne: ye fyght and warre, ye haue not because ye aske not, ye aske and receaue not, because ye aske amysse: euen to consume it vpon youre lustes. Ye adnouterars, and wemen that breke matrimony: knowe ye not how that the frendshyppe of the worlde is enemytie with God? Whosoeuer therfore wylbe a frende of the worlde, is made the enemie of God. Ether do ye thynke that the scripture sayeth in vayne. The spirite that dwelleth in vs, lusteth euen contrary to enuy: but geueth more grace, (wherfore he sayeth: God resisteth the proude but geueth grace vnto the lowely.) The texte.

IT standeth you in hand by al meanes to endeuour your selues, that you lyue in one concorde of myndes. But that can not bee possiblye done, excepte you dryue worldly gredye lustes (the poyson of concorde and occasion of debate) vtterly out of youre myndes. Will you saye, that you are not endaungered with suche maner of lustes? wherof than cometh warre? wherof cometh fighting and stryuyng amonge you? wherof come tumultes of contencions and debate? Christe hathe taught you peace and concorde, and wherof cometh discorde, but of that, that you serue the luste of humane gredynes, more than the loue of the Gospell? For if those gredy lustes dyd not kepe warre and were captaines in your membres, your tonghe should nether teare your neighbour, ne your hande begyle youre brother. Yet hitherto the reliques of youre olde lyfe are deprehended in you, you haue not yet all together caste of the olde manne: one manne coueteth for glorye, an other gapeth for gayne, thys manne ymagyneth how he may reygne alofte, that manne hunteth after voluptuous pleasures. And whiles you atteine not the thing that euery one vehemently coueteth for, you thrust out him that maketh sute for that that you doe: you enuy him that hathe obteyned, and stryue with him that semeth lyke to obteine. You are vexed in your mynde, and are toyled with sondrye tumultes of cares, while you can not obteyne the thinge, that you gredily seke for. And so nether is any man at peace with him selfe nor with other. Gredy desyres rumble in the harte, the tongue, the hande, and the other membres fight and kepe warre outwardlye with their neyghbour. And yet in the meane whyle nether are your insaciable desires satisfyed, and you youre selues fall from the thynges that are truly good. You ought to aske of God, if you haue nede of any thing, or if any thing did apperteyne vnto true felicitie. You aske of the worlde, that whiche ought to be asked of God: and of him either you aske not at all, or if ye doe aske, you aske not that you ought to do, nor after such wyse as you ought to doe. For in dede you either aske hurtfull thynges in stede of holsome thynges, or you aske in a wauering distrust, or elles you aske vnto a wicked vse, that is to saye, the thing that should liberallye be bestowed to the relief of necessitie of life, that you may spend to the satisfieng of your own voluptuous pleasures. And seing you doe thus, by what name shal I cal you? Christianes? your dedes say nay. I heare the title of Christians, but I see the deeds of whoremongers and whores. You were ones addicte vnto the spouse Christ, ones you were sworne in to hys wordes, he it is, that redemed you frō the tyranny of synnes: he hathe made you cleane with his own holy sacred bloud, to make vnto hym self a spowse vnspotted. And how is it, that you forget your profession, forget the benefite of youre bridegrome, forget your wedlocke trouthplight, and slide backe againe into the whoryshe loues of this world? Doo you not know, that God is a Jelous louer?

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He wyll bee wholy loued, he wylbee loued alone, he maye not abyde the wowynge worlde to bee loued, from the loue whereof he hathe delyuered you with so greate a price: he alone is sufficient to accomplishe all thynges. What is the cause than, that you aske of the worlde parte of youre blessednes? Doe you not knowe that God hateth them that halte on bothe sydes? He can not abyde a seruaunte, that is not contente to serue one onely maister. What maried manne is so pacient, that canne suffre hys enemye goynge about to wowe hys wyfe, to come in her company? And haue you thought it possyble for you to please bothe the worlde and God at ones? Doe you not vnderstande, that like as a wife, if she couple her selfe to an whoremonger, falleth quite awaye from the loue of her husbande, euen so a Christian, if he assaye to haue frendshyp agayne with the worlde, doeth vtterly receaue vnfrendshyp with God, who hathe no concord with the worlde? This therfore take for a certayntye, whosoeuer studyeth to be loued of this world, in the same his so doing, he maketh him selfe an enemye vnto God. There is no concorde betwene lyght and darkenes, nor betwene God and Belial. A maried husbande can not abyde hys wyfe to be playing with an whoremonger, he canne not suffre the loues of wedlocke to be deuyded in partes, though he haue maryed a woman of greate possessyon, though he haue maried a gentilwoman borne, though he haue maryed a woman of neuer so greate wealthe in all thynges. And wyll Chryste suffre hys spouse, whome he hathe saued from destruccion, whome he hathe set at libertye from bondage, whome he hathe washen from the fylthynes of synne, whome, whan she was naked, he hathe clothed: whome, whan she was poore, he hathe richely endowed with so many free gyftes; to haue a doo with the aduouterer the deuill? Thinke you it is written in the holy scriptures for naught: that the spirite whiche dwelleth in you, lusteth vnto enuie? In the lawe of Moses, somwhat was geuen to mannes affeccyons, they myght without punyshmente hate theyr enemye, it was lawfull for them to set theyr forcastes vpon muckyng vp of riches, he was taken for no vniuste manne, that requitte violence with violence, and one despightfull worde with an other. But the spirite of the Gospell, which now dwelleth in you, is full of gelosie, and (as I may so speake) enuious: he requireth more, for he wyll bee vehemently loued agayne, so that for hys sake he will haue wife, chyldern, yea and euen lyfe contemned. He canne not abyde to haue his resting house defyled with worldly lustes: he requireth pure cleane thinges, he requireth heauenly thynges, he leepeth backe, he runneth away, he is offended, if a manne bring the sluttish filthynes of thys world in to hys temple. Howbeit like as he requireth of vs a certayne exceadynge greate loue, and a greate deale purer loue, than Moses lawe dooeth, euen so it geueth a more plenteous grace. It is a very hard matter to accomplysh that it requireth, but it geueth strength to thys ende, that we maye easylye doo it. There is nothynge harde to the louing willer. This same is hys gyfte, that we shoulde loue him, or rather loue him agayne. He drewe vs with hys loue fyrst, and whan we were turned from hym, he reconciled vs agayn vnto hym. He will encrease hys giftes in vs; in case we geue our selues all together and wholy vnto him, if we depend of hym onely and of none but him, if we haue nothyng a doe with this worlde, nor with the deuill the prynce of the worlde. Whan I speake of the world, I meane nothyng elles, but wicked gredy lustes of vysyble thynges, wherin thys worlde promyseth a certayne false feyned felicitie. They

are great matters that are required, but thei be greater matters that are promised. He that is hable lyberally to geue myghty greate thynges, the same is hable also to geue encrease of strength; he that will largely geue excellent thinges to them that deserue naught, the same will vouchesafe also to geue encrease of strength to them that bee weake. Only let vs distruste oure owne helpes and the helpes of this worlde, and repose all our whole hope and assured confidence in hym. He forsaketh them, that arrogauntly truste in theyr owne substaunce: and he succoureth them, that ascribe nothing to them selues but trust wholy to the goodnes of God.

In dede thys is the thynge, that the lorde spake in tymes paste by Salomon. *God resisteth the stately hygh mynded and stoute, but he bestowveth his fauour vnto the meke and poore castawayes.*

Submyt youre selues therfore to God: but resyste the deuyll, and he wyll flye from you. Drawe nye to God, and he will drawe nye to you. Clense youre handes ye synners, and pourge your hertes ye wauerying mynded. Suffer afflyccions: and mourne, and wepe. Let youre laughter be tourned to mournyng: and youre ioye to heuynes. Humble youre selues in the syght of the Lorde, and he shall lyft you vp. Backbyte not one another, brethren. He that backbyteth hys brother, and he that iudgeth his brother, backbyteth the lawe, and iudgeth the lawe. But and if thou iudge the lawe, thou arte not an obseruer of the lawe: but a iudge. There is one lawe geuer (and iudge) which is able to saue and to destroye. What art thou that iudgest another? Go to now ye that saie: to daie and to morowe let vs goe into suche a cytye, and contynue there a yeare, and bye and sell, and wynne: and yet cannot ye tell, what shal happen on the morowe. For what thinge is your lyfe? It is euen a vapour, that apeareth for a lytell tyme, and then vanisheth awaye. For that ye ought to saye: yf the Lorde wyll, and yf we lyue, let vs do this or that. But nowe ye reioyce in youre boastinges. All suche reioysing is euyll. Therfore to hym that knoweth how to doe good, and doeth it not, to him it is synne. — The texte.

God wolde haue you to be most fast ioyned to him, shewe your selues obedient, as the wife obeyeth her husbande. And if the deuill goe about to diuorce you from the loue of him, dryue awaye the aduouterer deuill with his iuggling knackes, and he shall geue ouer greuing you. He shalbe afraied of you, if he see you stedfaste and constaunt in the loue of youre brydegrome (Christ). Therfore disseuer your selues from him, whether he feare you or speake you faire: and in godly studies and in holy and chast purposes apply your selues to God, and he shall applie him selfe to you agayne. Whiche waye so euer the lustes of mynde doo leane, thider you goo. If affeccions carie you vnto honestie and vnto heauenlynes, you goo vnto God: but and if they drawe you to the enticementes of the fleshe, you ryde poste to the deuil. You ought euermore to make haste to all one selfe same waye, and not to wauer now hither nowe thider. If you doo acknowlage Christe to be youre brydesgrome, it is requysite that you be cleane. Therfore you that yet hitherto are soyled in the filthie puddle of synnes, make cleane your handes, and absteyne from all kynde of euell dooinges: clense your hartes, that no maner of vngodly lustes kepe residence there: you that are now of a double minde, partely louing the thinges that are of God, partly ye thinges that are of ye world, dedicate your whole hart to Christ alone. Why do you seke for the felicitie in this world, which is promised in heauen? Why are you snared with the vaine pleasures of this world, & set naught by the ioyes that neuer shal haue ende? if you would be truly happy in dede, suffre sorow in this world:

if you

if you will haue ioye euerlastingly, mourne here in thys worlde: if you will bee mery for euer worlo endles, wepe here in this worlde.

Let this folish and pernicious laughing be tourned into holsome mourning. Let outragious ioiousnes be chaunged in to holsōe sadnes: let this high statelines be turned into lowe mekenes. Let no manne exalt him selfe alofte, but rather caste downe your selues in the sight of God, and whan you are so deiected he shall set you vp, and make you of a true highe estate. The lesse you shall arrogauntly chalenge vnto your selues, so much the greater thinges shall he frely geue vnto you. Arrogaunce hathe enuye to her companyon, and of enuye springeth backbytinge. And the moste wicked kynde of pryde is, to backbyte thy brothers name, that thou mayest appeare the more honeste: as though a manne woulde caste myre in an other mannes face, that he hym selfe myght seme the fayrer: and arraye an other mannes garment with fylthynes, that he him selfe myght seme the more trym. And what is a more fylthy thynge, than the brother to backbyte the brother, betwene whome all thynges ought to bee cōmune? Is it not euen as yf the right hand should mayne the lefte, as though it shoulde be more happye, if his felowe membre were in the worsecase. And yet they that auoyde aduouterie, they that auoyde thefte, and they that auoide periurie, abhorre not backbyting: as though it were a lyght faulte, where as it is so muche the more hurtefull, as it couereth it selfe with the cloke of relygyon. For he, that rayleth agaynste an other mans faultes, appeareth fyrste of all to abhorre from those vices, whiche he misliketh in others: and than he fayneth him selfe not to be moued of enuye nor of malice but of loue that he beareth to honestie. And euen this venome hathe his fayre spoken flatterie. Backbytynge on of an other maketh other folke to thinke the worse of them bothe, nether is there any more present a poyson vnto christian concorde. Nowe he that backbiteth his brother, or condemneth his neyghbour, dooeth wronge not onlye to him, whome he backbiteth, but also vnto the law, whome he appeareth to backbite and condemne. If thy brother be faultles, if it be not forbydden by the law, that he dooeth: with what face dooest thou damne the thynge that the lawe of the Gospell damneth not? but and if he be faultye, why doest thou bewray with thy backbytynge tongue, hym that ought to be punnyshed by the lawe? The lawe of the Gospell byddeth, that we iudge not one an other, that we condemne not one an other: and vnder pretense of the lawe we dooe after our owne affections. He that is the offendour, shall haue a iudge of his owne, why dooest thou than take his office vpon thee before the tyme? For thou goest not aboute to haue him amended but to be wondred vpon. Therfore who so euer backbiteth his neighbour, he either condemneth the lawe, in that it correcteth not filthynes, or backbiteth it as though it were to muche myngle mangled, and walowyshe, the office wherof the backbytour taketh vpon hym. The worlde hathe here publike lawes to punnyshe faultes. But it is the parte of christian softenes, to endeuour the amendement of all menne, rather than to iudge them. There is but one lawe maker, whiche is hable bothe to saue and to spill. And thinkest thou, that it is kepte secret from him that euery manne doeth offende? perchaunce he suffreth the offendour, that he maye ones repent, and he suffreth hym that he maye in his time punnyshe him the more greuouslye.

Why doest thou, beinge but a rascall paisgent, take vpon thee the iudges office? Why doest thou geue sentence before the tyme? It is a brotherly parte to monyish, it is charity to desire, it is ẏ parte of a well willer to blame, but to backbyte it is a pestilent thing, and a very pride to iudge. If thou obey the lawe, why doest thou arrogauntly take vpon thee the office of the law? If thou goest before the law, thou art not a keper of the law but a iudge of ẏ lawe. He that goeth before the lawe, goeth before God the maker of the law. God will not suffre any thinge to be vnreuenged, & he knoweth what ought to be punnyshed & how to bee punnyshed, & he is out of daunger of al sinne, and none but he. Who arte thou that iudgest an other? Thou condemnest thy brother, where thou thy selfe arte more faultie than he. For thou goest about to spill him that thou arte not hable to saue. Fynally thou chalengeste to thy selfe autorytie vpon an other mannes seruaunte, and not without reproche of the commune maister of all. Leaue him to his owne maister, whiche only iudgeth according to right. Thou perswadest to thy selfe, that to be right, which ambicion, hate, wrathe, and malice beareth the in hande, and arte many times offended at the moate in thy brothers eie, whan thou haste a beame in thyne owne. There is no man that more poysonly backbiteth an other mans name, than he that is moste farre of from true praise worthynes. And no manne beareth more easyly with an other mans weakenes, than he that goeth moste forwarde in the studie of true godlynes. Now they that with so great studie forcast those thinges that are of the worlde, hauyng neclected heauenly goodes, ought at least to be monyshed, by the incertayntie and shortenes of this life, that it is a folye to set a mannes ioye in those maner of goodes, whiche, how so euer they chaunce, yet they are somtyme sodaynely taken awaye by fortune: or if fortune snatche not awaye those goodes frome the owner, deathe snatcheth away the owner from the goodes. And wher they learne by dayly examples, that thus it is, yet as cleane forgetting all thys gayre, they dreame vpon long life, and as though they shoulde alwayes lyue, they heape vp to them selues riches for many yeares to lyue vpon: whan thys is a thinge moste incertayn, how long they shall lyue, and a thing moste certain that they shall not lyue longe: and they do not prepare for them selues vitayle rather for that life, that neuer shall haue ende. Goo to you fooles, with what face than saye you: to daye or to morowe we wyll gooe forthe in to thys cytie or that, and passe the tyme there one yeare, and get muche gayne, to serue vs for many yeares, whan you are incertayn, what shall happen the nexte daye after? where as lyfe is of it selfe moste shorte, so manye casualties, so many dyseases make it also moste incertayne: and you as though you were at a compacte with death, whiske about by sea and by lande, to get pelfe for your olde age, that peraduenture shall neuer come, whan no manne can promyse hym selfe to lyue so much as to morow. Wherto put you your confidence so in this life, as though it were a stedfaste and a substauncial matter? And what a thyng is this life of yours, for the which you set your only care, for the which ye labour and forcast, and for nothing elles? Truelye it is a smoke appearing for a shorte tyme and quyckly vanyshing away. Farre be therfore this maner of communicacion frō Christian folkes mouthes: we will go, we will passe of a yeare, we will bye and sell, we wyll get wynnynge, as though it were in your owne handes to knowe the chaunce to come. Rather lyue you for the tyme, dependyng of Goddes will, and saye: if the lorde will, and if he lende vs life, we will dooe this or that.

These thinges ought lightly to be cared for, that make for the shorte and incertayn life of the body: but all care ought to be set vpon those thinges, that make for the lyfe that neuer shall dye. And yet where thys lyfe hath nought, to truste surely vnto, seing it is subiecte to so many chaunces, and so many diseases: seig it is endaungered with so many casualties: seinge it is so slyppery and so fugitiue, yet you enhaunce your stomackes, and are puffed vp with trusting vpon youthe and riches, as though you should neuer dye. It is right, to bee stronge and hartie in the truste of Goddes helpe: it is godly, to bee chearefull in the loking for heuenly goodes: but all thys bragging cheare, that you stand in your owne conceate withall of goodes, being fyrste false goodes, and than goodes that muste shortly be taken from you, is not only wycked, but also folishe. Peraduenture thys were more tolerable, in those that were perswaded of theyr elders, that there is nothing remaining of man after he is lapped in his wynding shete: and were more excusable in them that gredely vse thys life, and loke for none other. As for you, the Gospelles philosophye hathe taught you, that this lyfe is to be contemned, and that you ought, with all studyous dilygence, to make spede to that heauenly life, whyche is not prepared by ryches, but with godly doynges. To conclude, he is the more greuous synner, whiche whan he knoweth by the Gospelles doctrine what ought to be doone, yet being corrupte with euill affections, foloweth after those thinges, whiche those men folowe that knowe not Christe.

The .v. Chapter.

The texte.

¶ Go to nowe ye ryche men. Wepe, and howle on youre wretchednes that shall come vpon you: youre ryches is corrupte, youre garmentes are motheaten, youre golde and siluer is cankred, and the ruste of them shalbe a witnes vnto you, and shall eate youre fleshe as it were fyre, ye haue heaped treasure together (euen wrathe to youre selues) in youre laste dayes. Beholde the hyer of the labourers whiche haue reaped downe youre feldes (whiche hyre is of you kepte backe by fraude) cryeth: and the cries of them whiche haue reaped, are entred into the eares of the Lorde Sabaoth. Ye haue lyued in pleasure on the erthe, and bene wanton: ye haue nourished your heartes, as in a daye of slaughter: ye haue condemned and kylled the iuste, and he hathe not resisted you.

Go to nowe you ryche men, that occupye the felycitie and pleasures of lyfe, whiche you ought to loke for eternall in heauen, poste haste here in this worlde: awaye with your syngyng, laye awaye your voluptuousnes, and madde pleasures. If you haue any witte, wepe and howle, and thinke vpon those euerlastinge miseries, that shortely hange ouer you. Imagine that the tyme is now presently come, that shal shortly come at hande, whan (those riches wherin now you most folishly put your confidence, being twitched awaye) you shalbe wise to late, and acknowlage that those gaye possessions doe not now helpe you: but for a counterfaict felicitie, a right true and euerlasting sorow is come. Where be now your riches that you haue gotten by hoke and by croke, you cared not howe? Your ryches are rotten, youre clothes are endaungered with mothes. Your golde and your siluer is marred with rust in the custody of a nygarde & slouenyng heyre. And ye rusting shal beare record of youre wickednes, which had rather haue it be lost wt mowling, thā to lay it out to ye vse of ye poore nedy. With ye expense of these thinges you might haue bought euerlasting life.

now shall the reste of the money, that you haue scraped out of the hard earthe, gnawe out the guttes of your soules, euen as it were fire. It shall bee to late and in vayne for you to frette your selues with repentaunce of your naughtyly kept money. It shall double youre sorowe, that you haue naughtly kept that you haue naughtyly gotten. In stede of the mercy of God, whiche you might with losse of substaunce haue bought, you haue heaped vp for your selues the wrathe and vengeaunce of God.

You were not only not liberall towardes your nedy brother, but you haue also defrauded the symple body of hys due wages. Beholde the reaper that swette with reapyng downe youre corne, being defrauded of hys wages, cryeth vnto God, and asketh vengeaunce, yea and he cryeth so, that theyr voyce pearceth through in to the eares of the lorde Sabaoth, whiche ought also to be dreadde of you. They were not hable to reuenge them of them that are bigger thā they, they were not hearde of any manne that was a iudge, whiche for the most parte fauoureth them that are moste wealthy, and they them selues helde theyr peace, but the wickednes it selfes cryeth out vnto the iudge God, whiche is nether afrayed of the wealthie, and also reckoneth the wronge of the poore oppressed to belong vnto him. But you for all that are not moued with the sorowfull griefe of the hungrye and thurstye poore. Other mennes swette hatched vp you. Other mennes hunger and thurste made you fatte. Theyr teeth hacked in theyr heade, they were starued for colde, they were killed with hungre and thurst. And you in the meane while passed your lyfe swetely and in pleasures vpon earthe, you lyued wantonly, & fedde your soules with al kindes of voluptuous pleasures, keping dayly feastes, as gorgeously, as other are wont to doe in a solēne, holy day, whan meate offring is slayne. Nether thought you it ynough to haue defrauded the poore manne, but you haue condemned and killed the Innocente that made no resystence. You thought you shoulde haue doone that without pu..nyshement alwayes, whiche you might doo without punnyshment of men. It is a kynde of manslaughter to defraude the symple of theyr lyuynge. And yet for all that, thys crueltie did not suffice your vnreasonable outragiousnes. You thyrsted after theyr blood, and whan the faultles people were shamefully handled, it was meate and drinke to youre stomakes. But the matters beinge turned cleane verse, they haue the fruicion of those pleasures that neuer shall decaye: and you bewayle youre shorte and folyshe tyme fyngred pleasures in euerlasting tormentes.

Be pacient therfore brethren, vnto the commyng of the Lord. Beholde, the husbande manne wayteth for the precious frute of the earthe, and hathe longe pacience there vpon vntill he receaue the early and latter rayne. Be ye also pacyent therfore, and settle youre heartes, for the commynge of the Lorde draweth nye. Grudge not one agaynste another brethren, leste ye be damned. Beholde, the iudge standeth before the dore. Take (my brethren) the Prophets for an ensample of suffering aduersitie, and of pacyence, which spake in the name of the Lorde. Beholde, we counte them happye whiche endure, ye haue heard of the pacience of Iob, and haue knowen what ende the Lord made. For the Lord is very pytiefull and mercyfull. But aboue all thinges my brethren sweare not, nether by heuen, nether by earth, nether any other othe. Let your yee be yee, and youre nay naye: lest ye fall into ypocrisy. If any of you be vexed, let hym praye. If any of you be mery, let hym singe psalmes: if any be dyseased among you let him call for the elders of the congregation, & let them pray ouer hym, & anoynt hym with oyle in the name of the Lorde, and the prayer of faith shal saue the sicke, & the Lord shal raise hym vp: and yf he haue cōmitted synnes, they shalbe forgeuen hym. The texte.

Therfore brethren, cast not downe your hartes, be not sory for your chaunce, haue no enuye at the ryche folkes, whiche seme to haue thinges as they would haue, deuise no reuengement against them, but pacientely suffer them vnto the comming of the lorde.

Now is the tyme of sowinge, than shalbe the time of reaping. The rewardes of youre godlynes dod not yet appeare, but yet they are in sauetie to be deliuered in theyr tyme. Beholde, he that is a tyllour of grounde, what labour taketh he, to his owne coste, and all in hope that the grounde shal in his tyme yelde the thinge that it receyued with aduauntage. And yet the profite of the groundes is not in euery place certayne. If it be not fauourable wether, and seasonable rayne in tyme to moysten the grounde that is tilled, and at the latter ende to kepe the corne whan it waxeth bigge, from the heate, the husbande loseth hys labour. And where he taketh longe labours here, vpon good hope of frute in tyme, & requireth not that it shoulde by and by appeare vp whiche he hathe sowed: how muche more is it reason, that you should paciently suffre the displeasures of thys lyfe for the frute of Immortalyties sake, namely seinge your rewarde is in sauetie, so that you in the meane while make a good sedenes. And therfore after the example of the husbande, confirme you and plucke vp your stomackes strongly vpon good and sure hope, beinge nether desirous of reuengement, nether wearye of well doinge. The lorde will comme, bothe to take vengeaunce vpon the wicked, and to rewarde you with immortalytie for your temporall afflicyons. Nether is that daye longe to, it shall come soner than it is loked for. Therfore my brethren, let no man thynke hym selfe the more vnfortunate, in that he is turmoiled with many sorowes, nether let any manne enuy hi that lyueth more at hartes ease. For nether is he, that suffreth the greater griefe, forsaken of God, but is exercised vnto greater rewardes: nether is thys manne therfore the more beloued of God, because he lyueth in more quietnes: but he wyll haue some, whose godlynes should ease other mennes miseries. Let not therfore that vngodly mourning (the token of malice and infydelitie) be amonge you that you be not condemned. For suche kynde of sorowfull mournynges are the fore tokens of a mynde that wryeth downe vnto desperacyon: let the shortenes of the tyme comforte you. Beholde the iudge standeth at the doore, the rewardes are in a readynes for euery one accordinge to the desertes of hys lyfe paste. In the meane tyme garnyshe youre myndes with the examples of holy fathers: if these thinges sholde haue happened to none but you, there had ben matter perchaunce for you to maruaille at. The prophetes suffred more greuous matters, which opened the true sayinges of God vnto ỹ wicked. And like as the wicked riche men at that tyme could not abyde the prophetes sayinges, euen so they canne not abyde the Gospelles doctrine nowe, because it is contrary and repugnaunt agaynste theyr studyes. Yet no manne bewayleth the prophetes chaunce, no manne thynketh them vnhappye, in that they suffred empresonmentes and fetters, nor in that they were slayne with sondrye kyndes of tormentes: but we iudge them happye, in that they were slayne for righteousnes sake. You haue hearde tell of the noble example of pacience of Iob. What a sorte of sorowes suffred he, by the cruel assaultes of Satan: you haue marked hys wrestlyng, and you haue marked hym also gettyng the victorie through the lordes helpe: by whose goodnes for euery thynge that was taken from hym by the malyce of Satan, he receyued agayne twise as muche.

The

The lorde forsoke not his stowte champion, but in laying vpon hym so many sorowes, he wolde haue his pacience recorded and seene: yea and that mercyfull lorde, and of his owne nature ready vnto clemencye, turneth vnto vs an other mannes malyce into the heape and vauntage of felycitie. Let youre mynde bee pure and playne, and let youre harte and youre mouthe goe bothe together. Let no man with feyned wordes deceaue his neighbour, but especyally my brethren, sweare not: lest by lytell and litell you accustume your selues to forsweare you. Amonge Jewes and heathens for fidelyties sake there is an othe put betwene. But amonge Christians, whiche ought nether to distrust any manne, nether be in will to deceaue, it is a vayne thyng to sweare. Who so euer is accustumed to sweare, is cousyn garmayne to the perill of forswearyng. Be you afrayed not onely to sweare by God in humayne affaires and in lyght matters, but also absteyne from al kynde of swearing, that you sweare nether by heauen, nether by earthe, or any other thynge, that the commune people esteme for holy and religious. Who so euer dare be bolde to lye without swearinge, he dare do the same also when he sweareth, if he luste. To be brief, he that is a good manne will beleue a manne without swearyng, and he that naught is, will not truste a manne though he sweare. But amonge you that are furnyshed with Gospellike playnesse, there is nether place of dystrustinge, ne to ymagin deceate. But let youre playne communicacion bee regarded for no lesse true and stedfaste, than any maner of othe of the Jewes or Paganes, how holy so euer it bee. As often as you confirme any thynge, confirme it with all youre harte: and performe in dede the thinge that you speake. As ofte as you denye any thinge, denye it with youre whole hearte: nether let any thynge elles bee in youre hearte, than youre mouthe speaketh: that there be no counterfaictynge in you, seing you are disciples of the trueth. And if there bee any manne sore afflicted amonge you, let hym not flee to the remedies of thys worlde, to rynges, to inchauntmentes, to baynes, and other easementes of sorowe, but let hym turne hym to prayer and lyfte vp hys mynde to God with most assured faithfull trust, and he shall finde present releasse of his mournyng. Agayne if a manne be well content in prosperitie, let him not enhaunce him selfe folishely nor behaue hym selfe madlye, but let him praise the liberall goodnesse of God in holy songes of thankes geuing. Nowe if any manne be punnyshed with syckenes, let hym not flee to the remedies of witchecrafte: let hym not spende a great sight of money vpon phisicions, whose curing is many tymes of suche sorte, that it were better pacientlye to departe out of the world: but let hym call vnto him the elders of the christian congregacion. Let them make their prayers to God for the dyseased, and annoynte him with oyle, not hauyng any prayers of wytchecrafte, as the heathen are wont to doe, but callyng vpon the name of oure lorde Jesu Christe, then the which there is no kinde of enchauntmente more effectuall. And let the prayers be done in a trusty faithe, and God shall heare and preserue the diseased. And there shall not only healthe of bodye bee restored vnto hym, if it be expedient for the diseased, but also if he bee endaungered with synnes (as diseases of bodye spryng for the moste parte of the sorowes of the mynde) they shalbe forgeuen hym at the elders supplicacions, so that the faith of them be commendable that doe praye and of hym for whome they doe praye.

Knowledge youre fautes one to another: and praye one for another, that ye may be healed. For the feruent prayer of a ryghteous manne auayleth muche. Helyas was a man — The texte.

mortall euen as we are, and he prayed in hys prayer that it myght not rayne: and it rayned not on the earthe by the space of thre yeares and sixe monethes. And he prayed agayne, and the heauē gaue rayne, and the earth brought forth her frute. Brethren, if any of you do erre from the trueth and another conuerte hym, let the same knowe that he whiche conuerteth the synner from goyng astraye out of his waye, shal saue a soule from death, and shall hyde the multytude of synnes.

And forasmuche as the life of manne consisteth not without light and dayly offences, it shalbe conuenyente to vse a dayly remedie, that you maye bothe releue euery one other with your mutuall prayers, and acknowlage euery one hys faulte to other. And so shall the remedy be auayleable, if thou acknowlage thy disease and desire helpe. Superstitious folkes suppose a secret hydden efficacie to be in theyr enchauntementes and prayers, but in very dede the prayer of a righteous manne is muche worthe, whiche through faithe obteyneth what so euer it desireth of God. Upon this condicyon Christe made couenaunt with vs, that what so euer we shall aske in a faythfull trusty confidence, we shoulde obteyne it, onles it be suche a thynge, as were beste not to be obteyned. Would you fayne haue a doctrine of thys matter? Helyas was a pure manne, he was a mortall manne as we are, and yet at his prayers it rayned not vpon the earthe thre yeares and sixe monethes. He prayed agayne, that it myght rayne, and anone the heauens, as hauynge hearde hys prayers, gaue rayne, and the earthe brought forthe his frute. Incase the heauen be obedient to the prayers of one godly manne, as though it were bewytched: is it any maruayle, if God beynge moste readye to forgeue, be pleased at the prayers of many? Now weighe this, brethren, if it be godly, if it be the partes of christyan loue, to ease the sickenes of an other mannes bodye through commune prayers: how muche more indifferent reason is it, that we shoulde succour them that be diseased in mynde? For it is no greate matter to obteyne this by prayer, that it may be somwhat longer before deathe happen to this man or that man, howbeit it muste nedes comme ones: but it is a great matter to haue auoyded the disease of minde. Therfore if there be any among you, that erre from the Gospelles veritie, ether to muche cleauyng to the lawe of Moses, or be a stubburne folower of heathen relygion deliuered of the elders, let no man thinke that he should be dryuen awaye with scoldyng, but it behoueth rather to endeuour with all studies to this ende, that he maye turne and repent from hys errour. For who so euer doeth thus, shall doo God a greate sacrifice, who wisheth not the deathe of a synner but rather that he may turne and lyue. For that man doeth a great feate, that preserueth the soule from deathe, delyuerynge hys brother from synnes, wherby he was holden in subieccyon of deathe. Nether in the meane tyme shall he wante hys rewarde: for Christe shall forgeue hym hys synnes agayne, how many so euer they be, that shall kepe his brother from destruccyon.

¶ Thus endeth the epistle of S. James the apostle.